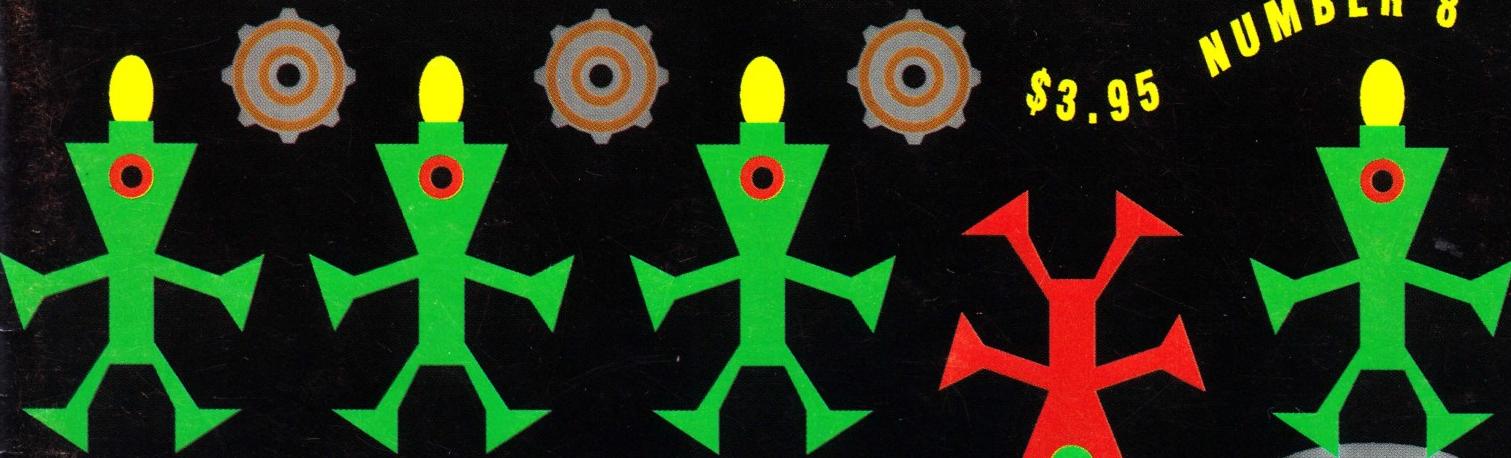


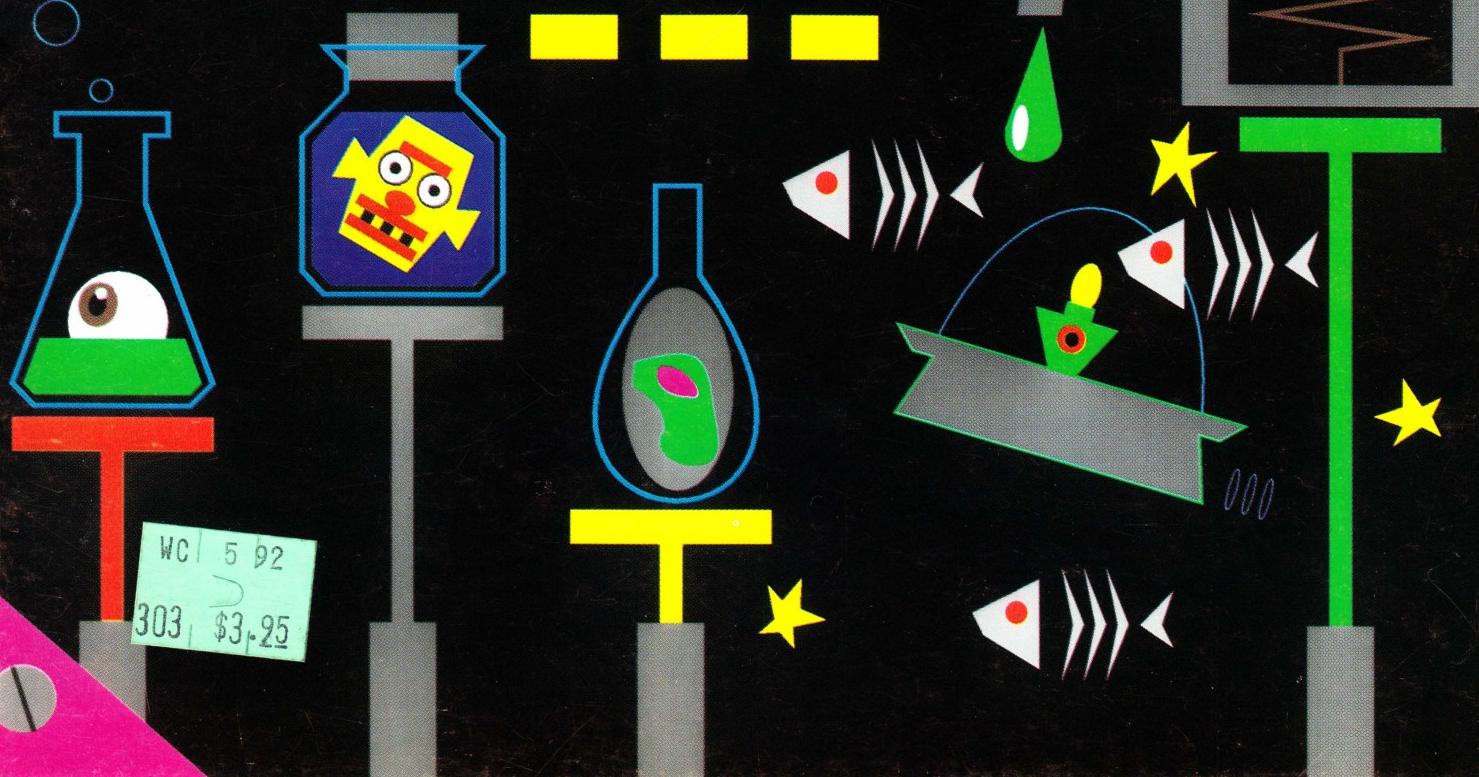
THE PERPETUAL NOVELTY BRAIN JACK

# GOING BOING

\$3.95 NUMBER 8



METANOIDS UNTIE!  
LAUGHING AUTHORITY OUT OF EXISTENCE  
SMART TECH  
COMIX, ZINE & MUSIC REVIEWS  
LEWIS SHINER INTERVIEW



**Actually,**  
we don't give  
a hoot  
whether  
you

resubscribe or not. Why should we? *bOING-bOING* doesn't even exist.

That last sentence is not a typo. There is *no such thing* as a real *bOING-bOING* magazine.

*Waitaminute. I'm holding a copy in my hands right now, reading these very words. You are trying to trick me into subscribing again, aren't you?*

Wrong! Like we said, we don't care what you do. Keep your money.

But before you decide what to do, maybe we should back up a bit and refresh your memory.

You see, last year at this time you were living in a tiny aluminium trailer next to a toxic waste dump in the middle of the Nevada desert. You were a washed-up, wiped-out, used car salesperson with a huge outstanding loan from the syndicate. You'd already lost your friends and family and you were just waiting for the hit men to pick up your trail and finish you off.

*Then one of our agents contacted you. As the leading developers of*



# why you must subscribe

trailer,  
*imagining*  
that you're  
reading it.

The

reason we've intruded on your digital hallucination is to ask if you'd like to continue the experiment for another year. By clipping out the coupon and sending \$14 (What have you got to lose? It's not real money.), you'll be sending us a signal that, yes, you'd like to remain in cyberspace for another year (or however long it takes our engineers to create four more virtual issues of *bOING-bOING*).

If you *don't* send the money, we'll pop the capsule hatch and wake you up. We'll also discontinue our efforts to mislead the Mafia, because you'll no longer be useful to us and your welfare won't be our concern.

In any case, we hope your first year in the DENSE has been lots of fun!

*Dear bOING-bOING: I don't wish to face the horrible reality that awaits me outside my capsule. Here's \$14 for the next 4 issues of your unreal magazine.*

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**bOING-bOING 4500 Forman Avenue Suite 2 Toluca Lake CA 91602**

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# BOING BOING

issue number 8 • spring 1992

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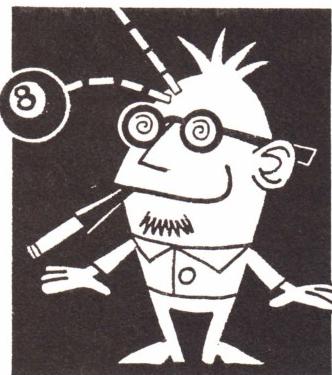
Port Publications

## new address!

We've moved to Los Angeles!  
Being in the crossfire of a  
crack war can't be any worse  
than digging one's self out of a  
24-inch Colorado snowfall.  
Here's our new address:

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Toluca Lake CA 91602

Phone Number 818/505-8169



# welcome

## Metanoia Issue!

David Jefferson from UCLA has created artificial bugs that exist in a computer universe. Their lives begin at the mouth of a virtual labyrinth, where they're given an initial allotment of energy credits and a random set of genes that control their behavior, which is limited to two-directional movement. The bugs spend their lives staggering and twirling, bumping into walls, backtracking, and starving. Most die gruesome, artificial deaths. A few hardy souls make it through the maze, thanks to a lucky roll of the random number generator that blessed them with barely adequate genes.

The bugs that complete the maze reproduce. Their children's gene sets are mutated slightly and they are placed at the mouth of the maze to perform the same exercise undertaken by their parents. This time, a slightly higher percentage of bugs are successful, and less clumsy about it. When their children go through the maze, it's even easier. The fiftieth-generation bugs scamper across the finish line. The hundredth-generation bugs get perfect scores, tearing through the labyrinth like cops through a free-donut shop.

## Specialization Is Brain Pollution!

What happens, though, when the *maze* gets changed? The champions of the first artificial universe bumble and shuffle around like robots with a bad chaos pattern stuck in their chips. Their offspring eventually learn how to cope with the new world, but never very well. In fact, the lineage from a fresh group of random-gene bugs will learn the new

maze faster, and eventually get perfect scores, while the first set of bugs never evolve enough to obtain perfect scores in the new maze. Somehow, the first maze gets encoded so tenaciously into the virtual DNA of the first set of bugs that it haunts their progeny forever.

Now I understand, when I see an old man in a car, why he's driving so slowly. About twenty years ago, he was probably coming home from work, and got shunted onto a detour because of heavy road construction. Unable to understand this new maze, and too proud to ask for directions, the man simply drove around and around, stopping only at gas stations to buy fuel, cigarettes, hot dogs, and to use the rest room. By now, he's pretty much given up on ever making it home, so he decides to take it easy on the gas pedal and *just roll, man*.

## How Many Models Can Dance In A Pinhead?

How can our paranoid one-maze monkey brains integrate new structures and patterns? Where is the hard reset button on our nervous system that'll allow us to flavor our thinking with new epistemological spices? One of *boING boING*'s purposes is to explore *metanoia* (the ability to simultaneously incorporate multiple tunnel realities) and discover some of the countless ways to achieve this fun state. If you know a way to "Get Met" let us know about it!

# MARK

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# • bOUNCING bACK •

## ▼ YO!

Kuru got it wrong in "Poker Faced Apes are a Drag" (from *bOING-bOING #7*). Max More didn't invent "EXTROPY" - Tom W. Bell did. See *Extropy, "Futique Neologisms,"* Vol. 3, No. 1 (#7) (Spring 1991) p. 34. Please help us fight extropy by correcting this disinformation.

IOY

*Kuru replies - I know, I know. My neural net is a fuzzy-gestalt setup, and I go for the big picture and tend to blur details. It comes with the territory of self-awareness and adaptability. There's no progress without mistakes; look at biological evolution. By the way, congratulations for confusing the word "disinformation" with "misinformation." To err is divine.*

## ▼ AHA!

Dan Quayle himself is not a subscriber to *bOING-bOING*. (I cannot identify my sources for this information.) This oversight would put the Universal Computer into a loop or even make it crash, perhaps directly causing the end of everything! Perhaps you could spare him a free subscription. Gord Knows he needs it.

Stephen D. Anderson  
Jacksonville, FL

*Dear Stephen - Thank you for bringing this to our attention. You have indeed discovered a potential bug, but luckily, we don't have to worry. You see, we obtained some X-ray photos of Danforth's head and learned that his brain has the size and elasticity of a golf ball, so when the Universal Computer starts changing nonsubs into golf balls, it will think that it has already taken care of Danforth's transformation. Whew! (For those of you who don't know what we are talking about, refer to "Why You Must Subscribe" in*

## bOING bOING #7)

### ▼ DEAR bOING bOING

Just bought a copy of #7. I was very intrigued. Like *Mondo 2000* only more irreverent. Especially enjoyed "Poker Faced Apes..." "A Good Example..." and "Breaking Cultural Trance." However, I thought Robert Campanell's article "Kill the Audience!" was a piece of doggie-doo! Is this guy, like, sixteen years old or some such age? Not that teenagers aren't intelligent, but this "article" so gushingly toed the cyberpunk party line it made me sick. And the virtual reality fantasy at the end was pathetic. I'm horrified at the constant hype of VR as the way to save/mutate the world's imagination: "Virtual reality has the potential to move pop culture from its current dark age to a new renaissance." Says who? What will the reality be like? Don't get me wrong; I'm very interested in VR and know there are many very intelligent theorists in the world. I guess what upset me was Campanell's uncritical attitude. Antero Alli has a great line in his article: "The real question seems to be: Once we have information, how are we interpreting it and putting it through our imaginations?"

Anyway, you've got my interest.  
Timothy E. Johnson  
Des Moines, IA

### ▼ DEAR bOING bOING

I am enjoying your neurozine except for the comics reviews, which are too mainstream. All the comics reviewed in the latest issue (#7) are available in most comics stores. Your readers would be better served by reviews of more alternative and mini-comics. It is often hard to send away for these without knowing what they look like or without an objective recommendation.

B. Munn  
Ont, Canada

## Notices & Errors

### Voting by Phone

774 19th St #5  
Boulder CO 80302  
303/444-3596

Evan Ravitz, director of the Voting By Phone Foundation is promoting the idea of telephone voting, which has many advantages over traditional voting methods: it's less costly, it reduces air pollution (driving to polling places), it makes it easier for everyone (especially elders and disabled people) to vote and it improves vote counting accuracy. The disadvantage is that more voters will participate in the election process, thus threatening incumbent politicians' dominance. A student membership to the foundation is \$5, full membership is \$20. Check it out!

### WCS Books Phone #

We screwed up when we listed the phone number for WCS books in issue #7's review of *Transreal!* Here is the correct info:

Phone - 303/771-2581  
Fax - 303/771-5441  
Credit card orders -  
800/247-6553

### Flashback Books

906 Samuel Drive  
Petaluma CA 94952

Last issue we listed some catalogs from Flashback that are not available. Catalogs 3 & 5 are out of print, and copies of 6 are running low (\$5, if you hurry). Catalog 7 is in the works and we'll let you know when you can send away for it.

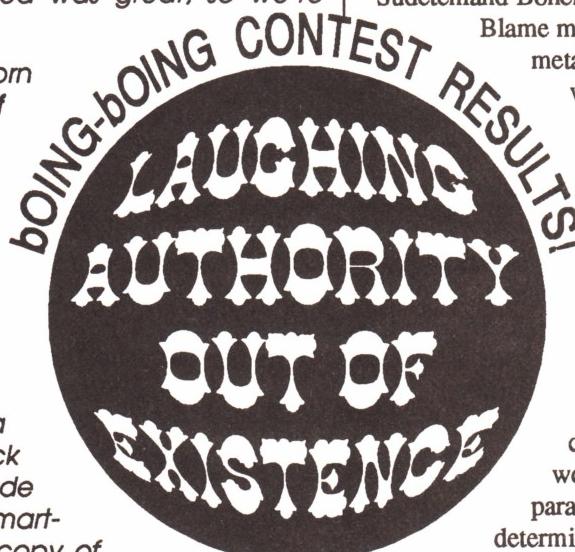
Last issue, we announced a *Strangest True Confrontation With the Authorities Contest*. Every entry we received was great, so we're running them all here.

It was hard to pick a winner. Dennis Eichhorn (see the review of his excellent *Real Stuff* comic in this issue) sent us a piece called *Proof* that raised the hair on the back of my neck when I read it. Jerod Pore's (Editor of *Poppin' Zits!*, see zine review this issue) New Zealand drug police ordeal is a classic example of authority's fear of people who look different. The winning true story is Paco Xander Nathan's *Zaibatsu's Golden Showers*, a whacked, loopy rant about the six-sigma fascists of Motorola and how he fought back and won. We liked it so much that we made him an editor of *boING-boING* (see his Smart-Tech piece in this issue). Paco's prize is a copy of Rudy Rucker's extremely rare *SPACETIME DONUTS*. Next contest: *I Dealt Out Poetic Justice*. No deadline has been set, but send in your entry as soon as you can. If you win, you'll get a special prize culled from our basement! - Mark

thin and pale. How thin? I'm 5'8" and weigh 115 pounds. Anorexics see me and feel fat. Blame the weird genetic mix of Appalachian White Trash, Sudetenland Bohemian and Iroquois. Blame my epileptic metabolism. I've lived with it. I can understand why my luggage would be more thoroughly searched than that of others. I know I look like a junkie. I know I radiate weirdness. But the pervasive racism of Kiwi Customs combined with worldwide drug paranoia made them determined to find something, anything.

Now let me tell you a couple of things about Sydney. She and my ex-wife are in head-to-head competition for the title of World Champion Pack Rat. Sydney's purse was ten years old and had stuff in it as old as the purse. Stuff long forgotten. Her passport had at least a dozen pages full of stamps and pieces of paper from the People's Republic of China. What a pair we made. It took all of fifteen minutes for customs to go through my stuff. It took forty-five minutes to go through hers. At the bottom of her purse they found a couple of wadded up pieces of aluminum foil. DRUGS!!!

Seven years ago Sydney had a boyfriend who did speed. Seven years ago those packets of foil may have once contained something illegal. But the front line soldiers proudly bagged a Red Communist Chinese Cocaine Smuggler! We were taken to separate interrogation rooms. We were strip searched. We were asked why we would want to sleep with someone of another race. The residue on the packets was tested. The tests came up negative, but that didn't matter. "Inconclusive," they said. Bits of information gathered from one person were exaggerated and taken out of context and passed on to the other person. They were telling me that



## International Drug PARANOIA

*Jerod Pore*

Here it is, two years after the event, and I'm still depressed about it.

In 1989, my girlfriend Sydney and I flew to Auckland, New Zealand. The customs agents picked us out for 'special' treatment, along with every non-white person, except for the Japanese in tour groups (who stay together and have little interaction with the non-Japanese natives of the countries they visit). Me and the Wogs were all suspected of carrying vast quantities of cocaine. Burly body

builders from Honolulu waltzed right through.

The threat of anabolic steroids and cigarettes laden with the mythic methamphetamine ice, when smuggled by muscular Caucasians, was of no concern to the stalwart guardians of Kiwi purity. (I know, I'm pegging the muscle men by the same standards that the Customs agents singled me out. Just because they wore most of the signs of steroid abuse does not necessarily make them import agents of that substance.)

Most of my life I've been excessively

Sydney admitted to being a cokehead. They told her the same thing about me. Sure, ten years ago I tried the stuff once, with my father and half-brother. Sure, I told the Customs goons about that. I'm frightfully honest. I found the coke experience distasteful. I had intimate knowledge of Edgar Allen Poe's nightmares. Once was enough. Sydney also did it a couple of times seven years ago. So we're each thinking the other person is a cokehead.

Boy, did they enjoy the shopping list of records that Tim Yohannon of *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll* gave me. And Paul Mavrides' business card puzzled them. They were also tempted to get me on importing pornography. I was reading a Kinky Friedman murder mystery with the opening line: "Winnie Katz's lesbian dance class was like God. Mankind never saw it, but you always knew it was there." I was fighting off a seizure. They wanted to know why I was so "precise" about my answers. So I let my stutter get as bad as it gets when I'm in a fugue state and took five minutes to answer each question. At least I was able to embarrass them.

The only way to get out of New Zealand was to confess to being cocaine smugglers and hop on the next flight out and never return. It was either that or fight the charges of importing coke or speed (whichever they wanted to call it by the time the trial came about) as well as importing Class B narcotics. Class B included over-the-counter diet pills and prescription Tylenol with codeine, two other items Sydney had in her purse. The diet pills were about five years old.

During the ordeal, Sydney asked her inquisitors what the possible sentence was for possession of these items. She was willing to take responsibility for that particular crime. They wouldn't tell her what she was facing until she asked, "Execution?" and they replied "Possibly." I guess it's the shared ancestry with the Afrikaaners that made the Kiwis such sadistic mind fuckers. Fighting the charges would have pumped my money into the New Zealand economy, the last thing I wanted. Sydney's mom grabbed her at the airport, and later claimed no

knowledge of her whereabouts.

Eventually the phone was disconnected and she, for all practical purposes, disappeared off the face of the earth. 1989 really, really sucked for us, but especially for her. In May of that year she was a student in Shanghai and barely got out of the PRC in time. I was able to cope with life only through the help of codeine, percodans and dilaudids washed down with alcohol. I realize this was no "Midnight Express." I know that atrocities of a far greater magnitude are committed against people every day, but I was still the most suicidal I've been in a couple of years. It was a long, drawn-out fight between me and the gun.

\*\*\*

What truly galls me is New Zealand's selling itself to the Politically Correct types. "Buy Our Products!" is the collective shout of that pest-hole nation. Well my friends, your support for the so-called boycott is misdirected. Next time you're tempted to get some of that New Zealand cheese in the local Health Food Store, think on these points:

**No Nukes.** When David Lange was first elected as Prime Minister, his govern-

ment banned ships of any nation that carried nuclear arms or

were nuclear powered. Their policy has been lax and American ships have been berthing in New Zealand ports, even though the United States Navy will never confirm nor deny the presence of anything resembling plutonium. What they don't know won't hurt them.

**Greenpeace.** Remember when the French commandos (Frog Frogmen) bombed the Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior in 1985? They sunk the ship and killed one person on board. They were caught and tried in New Zealand, but the Reverend Lange cut a deal with France. The murderers served a three month sentence. After that, they

were sent back to a hero's welcome in Paris. New Zealand may make the occasional rude noise about the French Nuclear tests in the South Pacific, but when it comes to actually doing something about it, their actions are the geo-political equivalent of putting up a smiley face sign that reads: "Welcome to New Zealand, Nuclear Free Zone."

**Racism.** As I said before, people of color were consistently singled out for the excessive searches and interrogations. From my conversations with the customs agents and the Kiwi version of the DEA, this is standard policy. Sydney was told, when she was taken to the cop shop for the usual prints and pix routine, that the jails held nothing but Wogs and Islanders.

**Drugs.** Well, this whole mess did a fine job in turning me into a drug addict. Think I'll have another beer and a perky, thank you. I imagine the Down Under DEA was just creaming it's jeans after they caught us. Yet it is selective harassment of the suspected abuser that increases the user's paranoia, and thus the profits of the cartels. Steroids might be illegal as well, but nobody bothers to look for them. Steroids are probably as great a drug 'threat' as cocaine. Look at

the typical Anabolic junkie. Lotsa muscles, drives a monster truck, thinks flag burners should get the death penalty. The practice and policy of New

Zealand is just what the Medellin Mob wants: illicit enough to make the trade lucrative, while sloppy enough to make it easy.

**The Environment.** The Kiwis are real proud about this one. So how come the government has been systematically dismantling the railroad system? The only way to get from place to place is by burning fossil fuels. From the tone of some of the articles I read in discarded newspapers and magazines in the airport, the car is king. Want to ride about on a bicycle? You're likely to be buzzed, and possibly punched out by the auto-erotics. •

At the bottom of her purse  
they found a couple of  
wadded up pieces of alu-  
minum foil. DRUGS!!!



©1992  
danny  
hellman

# ZAIBATSU'S golden showers



Paco Xander Nathan

M

ay 29, 1991.... It's a Scorpio moon waning. I've been software hacking 60 or 70 hours a week on an important neuroscience project at the microprocessor works of Zaibatsu Inc. Major stress, major neocortical brain focus.

Returning from a Memorial Day working weekend, the first thing to hit was a random drug test summons. Okay, well I've planned this out. Having recently been to court over the issue, my protest is already noted. Just take the fucking test, wrap up business, then leave the company. No fights, no more troubles. I walk down to the Med office to fill a yellow vial, knowing that I'm Doing The Right Thing for everybody involved. People have jobs, contracts that depend on my work with such a tight staff on the project. Families to feed. There is neuroscience history to be made, goddammit. I've already stood point in court and in the papers. So it's time to do something for the Good Of The Group and just take the test.

Passing by a personnel department vice president's office, the lobby is empty. Without pause and with no one to watch, I grab a large glass vase, hurling it in rage across the room. The vase smashes into a mess of shards and dirt, blanketing a fax machine. I'd wanted to Do The Right Thing, to act brave in the face of corporate harassment, but I really couldn't. Couldn't quite violate my own twisted ethics, and as you might imagine, my job is history.

Personal war stories and conspiracy theories aside, we've just run into a big bug. Its name is P.R.I.D.E., so treat it

accordingly. Yeah, that's a beautiful authoritarian acronym for a bunch of assholes scattered across Eli Lilly, Texas Instruments, Motorola, and a few others. Throw in the DEA for good measure and you've found the bug.

Their logic is simple. *They* (or part of *They*, maybe the *ey*) make and influence the making of most radio units used by the collective police and military forces crawling atop Gaia. No shit, Motorola made the radios for The-Side-That-Won-The-War on our first trip out to glimpse the Big Bomb. Lately, Motorola radios have been featured on CNN vid bites as vital, gee-we-can't-get-enough-of-'em mobile phones that were/are so essential for Desert Storm Troopers in the Gulf Oil War. Mandate immunoassay tests to protect God-fearing folk through electronics and you get a Truly American menage-a-trois cartel that's guaranteed to transmute regressive social taxes into near-term profits by obscuring relevancy with populist emotions.

So with the collected fate of rednecked asskickers across the globe cast on each roll of their silicon die, EY'VE GOT A FUCKING RIGHT TO MAKE SURE NO DRUG FIENDS EVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO EVEN BREATH ON SENSITIVE ELECTRONIC PARTS BEFORE UNITS GET SHIPPED TO THE FIELD. Talk about a mandate, with that one twisted little schismogenic tome, our friends at P.R.I.D.E. have rounded up just about every gun-packing cop's heart of hearts.

Imagine the implied cyberpunk meme: some acid-riddled computer hack may get just bitter enough at the valiant drug warriors to stick a virus inside the

integrated circuit "brains" of almost every cop radio on the planet. And just what kind of Shit Creek would we be in then? Image a Scores virus look-alike jamming the receivers of 911 units throughout the LA basin for the entire night shift of September 27, 1992.

Instead of addresses for bust sites, patrol unit screens would flash "Have a Happy Day!" Can you imagine what kind of inroads the *drug fiends* could make with that kind of lead time?!

Well we can't have that bullshit at any cost. Fuck the Constitution, we've got to stop these pukes NOW, AT ANY COST, BEFORE THEY GET A CHANCE TO TAKE OVER.

The funk of it is that I didn't dream up that last passage; I was told those words by an unsuspecting cop as he wrote me a traffic ticket. He had a nice 9mm automatic in a big, shiny holster so I didn't bother to volunteer my serum lysergic level history or disclose the amount of viral source code I keep online in case of an emergency. Actually, this Peace Occifer's twerped vision seemed like a damn good idea, and being a Motorola engineer at the Austin, TX microprocessor design site, I almost hoped it could work. Instead, I tried to reassure him that "*They* were doing everything *They* can to protect *Us*."

The words are real. The mandate is real. The action is real. Look at precedents being set at lightspeed by our friendly Feds (eg. the GURPS seizure of equipment at Steve Jackson Games and that ensuing tragedy). Look at mandatory drug test policies being imposed at Texas Instruments, Motorola and basically every other major US firm employing engineers. Why engineers? Because they play a major security role in any technologically advanced nation, and most of them are such fucking sheep that you can induce them to pee profuse golden showers into thirsty plastic cups just by implying threats against their salaried comfort and security of 30-year mortgaged three-bedroom homes in the burbs.

Then again, and maybe this is purely the product of my drug-addled brain, the game can twist chaotically to yet



# Yeah, you too can (inf)use the federal government to fight against the DEA and win.

an other vector. I spent six months of weirdness that cost several friendships and enough psychic energy to make Elizabeth Claire Prophet stop blinking, but the point was to provide key government witness *against* the fun folk at PRIDE. Yeah, you too can (inf)use the federal government to fight against the DEA and win. I chose to work through the Dept. of Labor, just for shits and giggles, and eventually won a federal lawsuit without the benefit of a lawyer (NLRB case #16-CA-14661-1 and #16-CA-14661-2). So here's a few tendencies to keep in mind if you care to party this way yourself:

**1: The enema of my enemy is my friend.** The US Gov't tends to step all over itself. State and local levels reflect this shortcoming, but not as acutely. Administrators despise other administrators who steal their jurisdictions, which will happen at a predictable rate. Feds expend massive bucks and cool points to defend turf.

**2: Even cops have brains.** Creatures as low on the political food chain as cops tend to recognize the fallacy of drug testing, though few admit it. Busting a middle-aged circuit designer in Columbus for smoking a joint on the weekend has no effect toward preventing a gang fight in Oakland. The unreliable and expensive tests have little practical value, other than to limit national productivity and thereby increase overseas profits on cocaine imports.

**3: Big companies are big for the sake of stockholders.** Realistically, most corporate executives tend to deal with about 20 key people and generally

say "fuck the rest." Corporate bodies actually expend massive energy to negotiate internally among warring tribes.

**4: Personnel managers suffer from premature orgasm.** Personnel departments tend to "enforce" drug tests. Personnel departments tend to be run by people who bore even themselves and look for *any* opportunity to flex crustacean egos and/or suck up to corporate executives. Personnel managers dream about turning a potential disciplinary action into their own favorable progress report and they tend to fuck up in the process. They fall for bait. Trout exhibiting this behavior end up coated with batter in a frying pan.

**5: Underdog was a secular humanist.** Stand up against an unpopular change in tradition and all kinds of people will tend to come out of the woodwork in support.

**6: Only sharks and other lawyers like lawyers.**

**7: Hallucination is a valid human thought process.**

The point is that humans in pressed white shirts and power ties who play patriarchal roles for a living like to think they have achieved Fourth Circuit activation just as deftly as your everyday Bavarian Illuminatus, while in reality they tend to be about as collective as Leona Helmsly. Big Government and Big Business are a Big Fucking Joke to people who have minds and wills. Anybody who's Big enough to make your life miserable via a drug test has at least a half dozen equally Big assholes ready to gun him down for completely disparate reasons. *Use them.*

Back to the story. Trouble began a year before, just prior to Motorola's public announcement that it would begin mandatory random drug testing (RDT). Some engineers had been tipped off in advance by sympathetic managers. We teamed up with an

employee group at Texas Instruments, fighting its own RDT and began a wave of subversion and protest. Some of us at Motorola went public with the protest, incurring the wrath of personnel suck-ups. I was threatened with career troubles and possible firing for not being a good corporate flockling. Eventually, my paychecks got "misplaced" for several weeks and personnel refused management attempts to correct the matter. Medical benefits were also suspended, right when my wife needed an operation.

To make a long story short, the US Department of Labor heard about this fiasco and started taking affidavits, since it sounded like a violation of Fed labor regulations. I got called into personnel immediately after federal charges reached Motorola. They politely forked over checks for all back pay along with several grand worth of vacation bonus, and tendered profuse apologies for "the administrative error," as well as an urgent suggestion to forget the whole thing.

The federal government didn't forget. Hearings were held before a federal administrative judge in January 1991. During the trial, Motorola's attorney attempted a last ditch effort to void my testimony by bringing up drug charges during cross-examination. The rat bastard was desperate/vile enough to accuse me in front of a federal judge while I was under oath. It was an anal extraction to turn the hearing into a criminal case against me, since Motorola's attorney was later forced to admit he lacked any evidence. An executive vice president for Motorola apologized to me in person afterwards, claiming "That's just what lawyers do sometimes."

The judge eventually decided in favor of each government witness, finding Motorola's defense and sworn testimony to be contradictory and of questionable truth. Motorola was ordered by the federal government to cease harassment. Ey had to post notices that employees had the right to protest in several forms, including the wearing of a "Just Say No To Drug Testing" T-shirt. I'd been thrown out of work for wearing one in

May 1990, but the security guard pushing me out the door whispered advice/instructions that lead to my successful lawsuit.

"We now return to the first annual Austin Vase Tossing Contest...." When I threw that vase it was pure instinct, passion and no forethought... Limbic Runaway Express Train. The repercussion was that it brought an immediate suspension, regardless of work in progress. It cost time, energy and cash because people rallied in support to block personnel's insistence on dismissal. Several managers, directors, contractors and about a half-dozen vice presidents spent the next couple days negotiating a way out of the situation. Figure several thousand dollars for the diverted salary alone. Many friends helped intervene and an official answer came back: "Just take the test and we'll forget the whole thing." So I quit.

What I did was stupid, since \$50k a year *does* buy a lot of brain toys. But it was about as stupid as a TV show I saw a couple years back, about a student who walked out into a busy street waving a white rag to stop traffic. However, the student was Chinese and he stood in front of an approaching army tank in the middle of Tienamen Square. It was a stupid act, because by all rights the tank commander should have gunned him down just as a matter of policy. But the story turned out differently, since the tank commander and the protesting student were all the same people. They were a people who recognized a madness of their own making and stopped.

I had a chance to catch up with Timothy Leary in LA a couple months 'ere the vase hit the fax. We talked a while about Motorola's neuroscience project, the current evolution of virtual reality and mostly about our respectively brief tenures at West Point. One issue that kept striking our conversation was a question of normalcy and its related mind control aspects.

A human brain is supposed to run as a web of cooperating sub-systems. The lower order reptilian system handles survival. Woven around that, the limbic

system governs group behaviors and values. Beyond that, the neocortex provides a sense of self and independent realities. Break the bonds between these systems, freeze their interplay, and you can warp a person's mind like putty. Moonies, for example, love to swell the limbic system so heavy with Good Feelings About The Group, that new recruits atrophy conscious use of their neocortical areas for individual thought.

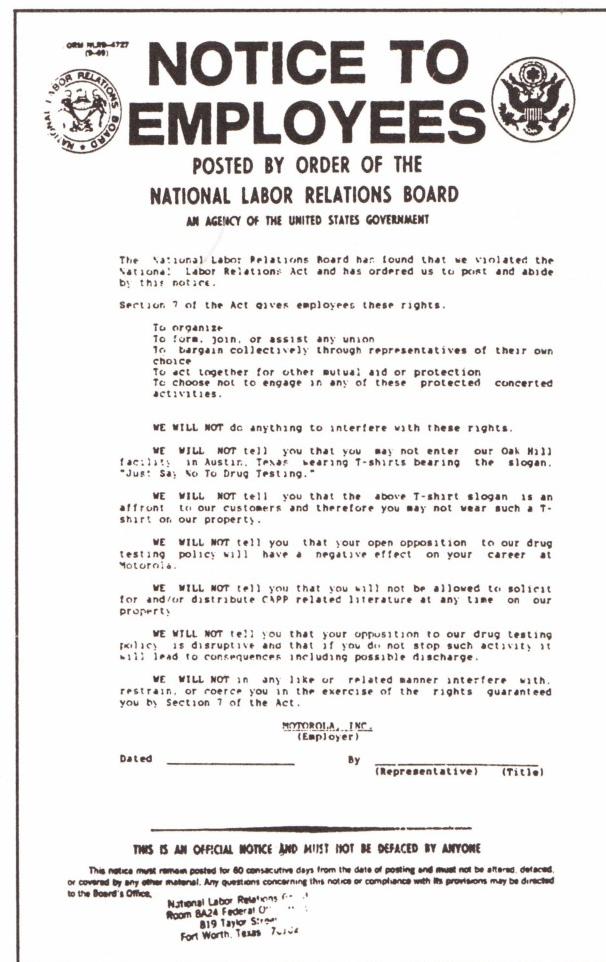
Politicians have been listening. There's a related psych theory about mind control called "schismogenesis" (Gregory Bateson). People have become so dependent on language as a basis of collected thought, that if you dink with language severely, you can physically rearrange the functional structure of many, if not most, persons' brains. The "schismogenesis" concept forces a split between what people actually do and the way that they communicate ideas and reasons for what they do.

The trick is to use public media to postpone natural brain system connections. The young Nazi soldier gets lectured on the glory of killing neighbors to "protect the people." Any contradictions (neocortical question of self-integrity) he may feel (limbic system resolution) can be relegated (schismogenesis postponement) to the victory party after the holocaust (reptilian joy). Machiavelli achieved infamy by parodying this brand of authoritarian rhetoric. Likewise, moral relativists love to ignore the issue of time. In a sense, schismogenesis rearranges time to provide a kind of virtual reality for ethical discourse, and authoritarians get to pilot the data glove.

Normalcy is an ideal evolutionary soup for schismogenesis. People in 1990s America have been primed to all but turn off

neocortex use (Just Say No) and have been desensitized to reptilian outcries for emergency help (homelessness, S&L crisis, Kurds) by politico-media infomercialism. The only brain part that's generally in sync is the limbic hive-thang (Desert Storm Troopers), which has typically atrophied after thousands of years of patriarchy's systematic genocide against all known tribal cultures (Burning Times, Third World Poverty). So now it's prime time on Main Street USA for some corporate hotshot to engender Constant Respect For Authority, sorta like in RoboCop 2.

Motorola Inc. spent over \$ 2.5 million to print and distribute sophistic "Drug-Free America" guide books to each of its employees. (I covertly approached the publisher as an obliging Motorola vendor who wished to follow the RDT plan, and got a price quote.) Upon summons, each Motorola employee is required to report to the local Med office by 4 p.m., sign a



consent form and give a sample. A first positive test gets followed by another Motorola sample and test cycle. A second positive test results in rehabilitation or immediate termination. People are encouraged to turn in coworkers they suspect of drug use, to accelerate the "verification process."

Note that the drug test used is known to result in about 10% false positives on the first pass, which implies that for 5000 employees in one plant, at least 500 will be privately accused of drug use on a first positive regardless of actual practices and despite Motorola's published claim for a zero false positive rate. Note that the mandatory consent form removes any legal liability from Motorola in case of false positive or error in execution. Failure to sign the consent form results in immediate termination. No stray marks are allowed, no limitation sheets, no "signed under duress" statements. Dites

rien.

Our site witnessed an uproar of employee protest due the lack of legality and ethics on the part of Motorola. True to form, the genius behind Motorola's RDT, who also happened to be the former CEO and the founder's son, immediately flew into town to hold an "open forum." Whenever, and however, employees questioned RDT on the basis of false positive statistics (reptilian survival), deterioration of company morale, personal objection to corporations dictating social and political beliefs (neocortical assertion), etc., our Man Of The Hour retorted a great comforting sophism (schismogenesis): "Don't worry about that, we've got to keep competitive edge against foreigners... get rid of the evil druggies in our midst and just watch for the rise in Quality and Profit" (postponement). Decriminalizing drug use might encourage a better path out of this

madness, but only the Enlightened Fringe seems to realize this fact so far.

Dr. Tim's words dance a beat through my head. Those several "tendencies" I've extemporized assess some general human behaviors. Read from that: "society as a dynamic system," which behaves chaotically and not by some white alpha male CEO's grand plan. Normalcy, on the other hand, is a fiction based on temporal/cultural slight-of-hand tricks. Billy Graham will tell you differently, but seriously, does he really know squat?

The satellite video transmission of a lonely Chinese student standing in front of a tank is fading, but not forgotten. McCarthy's Red Scare bought the farm with one questioner and a TV camera. Just a few neurons could help to seize the bifurcation points and perturb this drug test messiness out of a potential schismogenetic tailspin.

Anybody wanna party? •



# PROOF

Dennis P. Eichhorn

I sat and listened while Mink and Peggy told me their story. "We were out fishing on the Sound between Burien and Vashon Island," Mink began. "Just killing some time, catching a few rays, having a couple of beers."

"It was a nice day," Peggy remembered. "Mount Rainier was looking good. You know how sometimes the base is sort of obscured, and the peak seems to be floating free? Well, it looked like that. So I took out our camera and snapped a picture of it. Among

others."

Mink lit a cigarette and picked up the story. "It took us a few days to finish that roll of film," he said. "Peggy developed it in our darkroom at home. That's when she noticed the specks."

"There were two specks," Peggy chimed in. "A big speck and a smaller one right beneath it. I hadn't noticed anything there in the sky when I took the photo."

"Naturally, I was curious. I made an enlargement, focusing on the specks. And guess what they turned out to be?"

"What?" I asked? "Angels? Ducks? Flying saucers?"

"None of the above," Mink said. "It was a small airplane, dropping what looked to be a body in a chair."

"What?" I exclaimed, sitting forward. "A body in a chair?"

"That's right," Peggy concurred. "It looked like somebody had dumped a body in the Puget Sound, between Seattle and Tacoma."

"We called the police right away," Mink continued. "They said to sit tight and wait. Within an hour two FBI agents arrived. They questioned

us, and seized the prints and negative."

"The agents told us not to talk to anybody at all about this," Peggy said. "They warned us we could get into big trouble if we ever did."

I eased back in my chair. "So why are you telling me about it now?" I asked them. It seemed like the logical question.

"Because it happened over two years ago, and we've never heard anything more about it," Mink answered. "That doesn't seem right to us."

"Too bad the FBI took the evidence," I said. "Now you can't prove what you say is true."

"Yes, we can," Peggy said. "I made another print before the agents came. Here it is..." and she held out a black and white photograph.

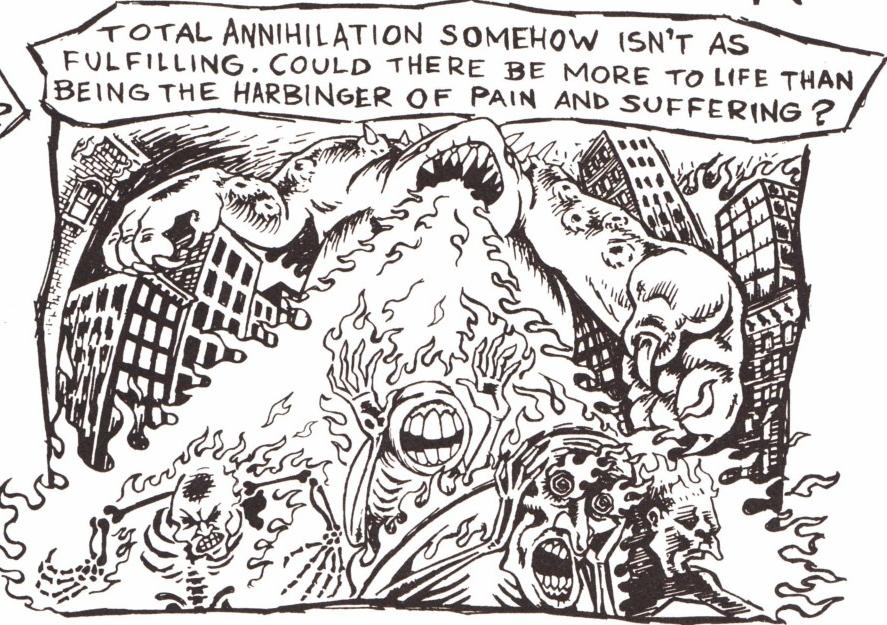
"... See?" I looked closely at the grainy print. Sure enough, there was an image of a light aircraft, and what looked like a body in a chair falling from it.

"You're right," I concluded. "It's hard to argue with this."

We all nodded our heads in agreement. •

# REFLECTIONS OF A MONSTER

BY S.M. TAGGART ©1991



# Everything I Know I Learned From Editing

# PIHKAL

by  
Dan Joy

*Quaaludes. John hit a low, growling sustained flatulence on the synth. Jeannie seemed to melt yet further into the pillows until she was a perceptible shade less distinct from the shifting light-and-color gestalt of the couch. Next to her a hulking black man in spiked leather continued his endless, wired soliloquy on the virtues of Barry Manilow.*

*The noise again, and the lights. Definitely the phone. My left hand slithered towards the oozing translucent plastic through which images of internal circuit boards glowed, refracted, rippled. I was able to get a solid grip on the receiver when my fingers had sunk about one knuckle's length into the spongily yielding, glistening plastic surface. While the long, densely tangled spaghetti of a phone cord coiled around itself like a Medusa's mop, I raised the softly squirming telecommunications device to my mouth and ear.*

*Dan Joy Literary Services," I sputtered.*

*"Yes!" exclaimed a chipper male voice on the other end of the line. "May I speak to Dan Joy?" The crisp syllables bounced around inside the receiver like ping-pong balls on methamphetamine.*

*"Speaking," I dribbled viscously.*

*"Mr. Joy, this is Alexander Shulgin."*

*"Excellent. How exciting to hear from you. Just a moment, please."*

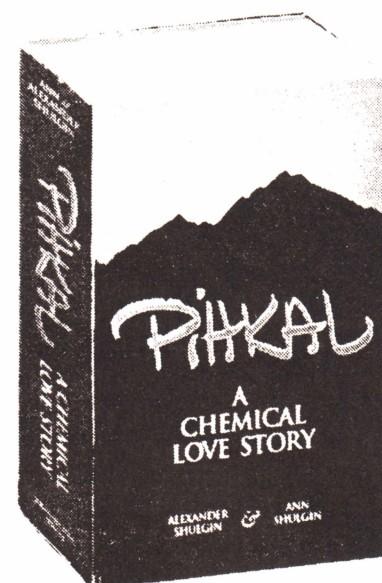
*With a judo chop of my right hand I signalled a sharp drop in volume to the musicians splattered about the room in questionable conjugation with various instruments. "Yo! Please bring it down, guys. Business call."*



or the year that followed I served as editor and general consultant for the publication of the nearly 1,000 page scientific *magnum opus* and fictionalized autobiography of Northern California psychopharmacologist Alexander "Sasha" Shulgin and his wife and research partner, Ann. This behemoth of a manuscript had already been two years in preparation by the time I got to sink my fussy, twitching, meddlesome editorial fingers into it (thereby becoming known to the Shulgins as Dan "Spare Me" Joy, after the editorial comment appearing most frequently in my scrawled marginal notations).

**THE PHONE RANG.** Or was it the synthesizer burping again? I could have sworn the sound had been accompanied by a burst of multicolored points of light to the left of my field of vision. (That was the visual telltale of an incoming call for use when the ringer was turned off, or in the dark when the phone was hard to locate.) Mark struck a lightning-quick arpeggio on the chimes; the overtones hung in the air for a seeming eternity, rolling over each other until they resolved into a flutter and wow of a distant angelic white-light chorus on

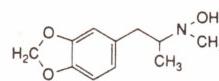
It was an opportunity I jumped at eagerly. Ann and Sasha Shulgin were already legends in my own mind. For the last thirty years Sasha had been pioneering -- quite legally, I was given



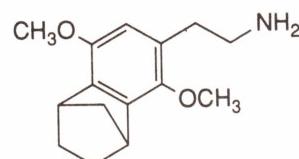
to understand -- the synthesis and preliminary experimental exploration of psychedelic chemicals. He had been author of the first published paper on MDMA (Ecstasy) in humans, and had been the innovator of over 100 novel psychochemicals. Among these were 2CB and DOM (or STP), sometimes

included by *cognoscenti* of such compounds on the short-list of "Sasha Shulgin's Greatest Hits." Though I knew various people who at least claimed to know the Shulgins -- hence their contacting me for services to their publishing project -- I hadn't yet met them. Sasha had a reputation as warm and brilliant, if reclusive. I was intrigued by the chance to sniff out at closer range one of psychopharmacology's more notorious sculptors of molecular mindstuff.

On that fateful Saturday afternoon in October of 1990, Sasha and I conducted a rambling 45-minute phone call, the details of which, for some reason, seemed to have escaped my memory. Shortly after we hung up, Ann called back to put in her two cents' worth for another fractally unfolding three quarters of an hour. Although I had serious doubts as to my own coherence during both of these conversations, I seemed to understand Ann and Sasha,



FLEA



2C-G-5

The structure  
of the work itself  
seemed to form a  
convincing argument  
for the  
neurotoxicity of  
the chemicals so  
frequently ingested in  
the text.

and they seemed to understand me. Good enough. A deal was struck.

A week or so later a truly gargantuan pile of paper was fork-lifted into my apartment by the UPS man. I set up a stepladder in my office so that I might more easily access the further reaches of this mountainous ink-labyrinth.

The first mind-bender was the title. *PIHKAL*? How was one supposed to pronounce it? What the hell did it mean? Oh -- *Phenethylamines I Have Known And Loved*. Of course. It should have been obvious.

And then there was the sex. Miles of it, in microscopic detail, assisted by an astonishing array of material adjuncts from obscure psychedelics to various lengths of laundry-line.

And the structure -- if one could call it that -- took several days of high-risk acrobatic paper diving to unravel. There were two major divisions. The first consisted of the novelized autobiographical material. This was opened with a large section by Sasha, followed by another from Ann. It terminated with a third section which intermingled chapters from both viewpoints, but featured no obvious indicators as to which had been written by whom.

The second major division consisted of a sort of 400 + page encyclopedia of 179 entries, each detailing the synthesis (in language scrutable only to the experienced chemist) and effects of a different psychoactive compound. Included here were also -- and sometimes rather science-fictionally hyperbolic -- extrapolations based on the above.

I eventually discerned that this second division was intended to be set in tiny type along the bottom of all the autobiographical pages in the form of an

extended running "footnote." However, it bore none of the standard relationships to the main text for which "footnotes" are usually known.

And then there were the appendices. One of them was an index to the footnote, and another was an index to this index, or an appendix to the appendix, to the aforementioned footnote. The structure of the work itself seemed to form a convincing argument for the neurotoxicity of the chemicals so frequently ingested in the text.

Although the overall shape of this literary edifice obviously needed some reworking, each and every brick of it was hewn of pure gold. It was clear from the start that both Ann and Sasha were writers of some *calibre*. Ann's exceptionally well-told and resonant tale of a woman's spiritual and psychic odyssey included a chapter on her first encounter with a psychedelic -- peyote -- which immediately struck me as stunningly beautiful. In my estimation it is unsurpassed within the category of narratives of its kind, even by the works of Aldous Huxley.

Sasha's writing sported a deceptively simple, unpretentious and succinct style. In evidence was an approach to life, work, and colleagues seamlessly integrating elements as disparate as: self-deprecating humor; occasional but consistent displays of an attitude many might consider arrogant; skilled use of the image of the somewhat maverick, manic scientist as something akin to the archetype of "The Fool" in the Tarot; and often painful introspection presented with rigorous honesty but not self-indulgence. The net effect was one of charm.

As I worked on *PIHKAL*, my conviction grew that it was a watershed in the literatures of scientific and psychological autobiography, chemistry, psychopharmacology, psychedelia, and altered states. It cogently presented a vast diversity of unique and valuable information with priceless candor and straightforwardness. At the very least, *PIHKAL* proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that it's possible to lead a life both heavily involved with psychedelics and prodigiously productive by

anyone's standards.

(So what if I was the editor? I'm not getting a percentage of the project, so I stand by my opinion as the one I'd hold even if the finished product had fallen into my lap out of nowhere.)

Ann and Sasha turned out to be a total blast to work with. They were pleasant, diligent, hardworking and tolerant (almost pathologically so, considering their choice of editor). They both had a sense of humor so frightfully demented as to keep pace with my own. Over several months, Ann, Sasha, and I untangled, trimmed and polished *PIHKAL* into the book you will shortly hold in your hands if you know what's good for you.

Well, *PIHKAL*'s available now, and due in part to the excerpt recently published in *Whole Earth Review*, is already selling via mail order at a phenomenal rate far outstripping my most optimistic flights of fancy. Just about everyone who's read it seems to agree that it's a milestone. Just *what kind* of milestone depends on whom you ask. It may be many years before there is general agreement as to which of *PIHKAL*'s many facets are of primary historical importance. Although the *Doors of Perception*, by comparison, was hailed as a watershed at the time of its publication, its true significance as appraised forty years later would not have been predictable in the 1950s. So, I think, it will be with *PIHKAL*, a work whose impact and meaning will continue to deepen and unwind in the decades to come.

I feel privileged to have lubed the tubes through which *PIHKAL* has been given birth. •

*PIHKAL: A Chemical Love Story* (ISBN 0-9630096-0-5; trade paperback) is available from Transform Press, PO Box 13675, Berkeley CA 94701 for \$22.95 (\$18.95 + \$4.00 p&h). CA residents add \$1.38 sales tax.

*Dan Joy is a San Francisco-based freelance writer and editor specializing in consciousness change with a particular focus on psychopharmacology.*

# CORE DUMP

## Get a Free Issue Added to Your Subscription!

You are storing important information in that cute little brain of yours. We intend to extract this information by coaxing you to answer the following questionnaire. After everybody fills it out and mails (or faxes) it in, we will tally the answers to determine what direction *bOING-bOING* will take. If the survey results match our pre-conceived expectations, we'll use them to improve the magazine. If the answers are surprising or scary, we'll ignore them by calling them "experimental error" and do some creative curve-fitting.

Feel free not to answer any nosy questions. But if you want to extend your subscription with a free issue, please include your name and address.

### 1. How do het-up do you get over the following regular features:

	Drool	Smirk	Yawn	Retch
<i>bOUNCING bACK</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Catalog review</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Consciousness Tech</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Ear Candy</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Funnybook review</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Looks at Books</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>neurotica</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Welcome!</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Zine review</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Do you want more, less, none or the same coverage of:

	More	Less	None	Same
Book reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brain toys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catalog reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers & hacking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conspiracies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyberpunk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feature articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fringe science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Politics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychedelia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smart drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Software reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zine reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. How do you rate *bOING-bOING* overall?

### 4. What do you like best about *bOING-bOING*?

### 5. What do you like least about *bOING-bOING*?

### 6. How much of each issue do you usually read?

### 7. What do you do with *bOING-bOING* after you read it?

### 8. Which of these toys and goodies do you own?

VCR	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mac	<input type="checkbox"/>
DOS Clone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amiga	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camcorder	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brain Machine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

### 9. What kind of stuff do you buy through the mail?

Books	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brain Toys	<input type="checkbox"/>
CDs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex Toys	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smart Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Videos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

### 10. In general, *bOING-bOING*'s articles are (Check all that apply)

Too ninny-blissful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too non-critical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Well-balanced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Well-imbalanced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too scoffing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Void of content	<input type="checkbox"/>
Info-dense	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disinfotainment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Useful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

### 11. How much money do you spend per year on mail order?

### 12. Do you read the ads in *bOING-bOING*?

### 13. Define yourself by what you do.

### 14. Define yourself by what you do to squeeze money from the system.

### 15. If *Time Magazine* interviewed you, how would they describe you?

### 16. What would you tell the audience if you were invited to appear on the *700 Club*?

### 17. How much money did you squeeze from the system last year, anyway?

### 18. How many times have you ridden 'round the sun?

### 19. XX XY Other

### 20. What other magazines do you read?

### 21. Use an extra sheet of paper for additional comments.

### 22. If you'd like your subscription extended for an extra issue, we need your name and address.

Please mail to *bOING-bOING*, 4500 Forman Ave #2, Toluca Lake, CA 91602 or FAX to 818/505-1338

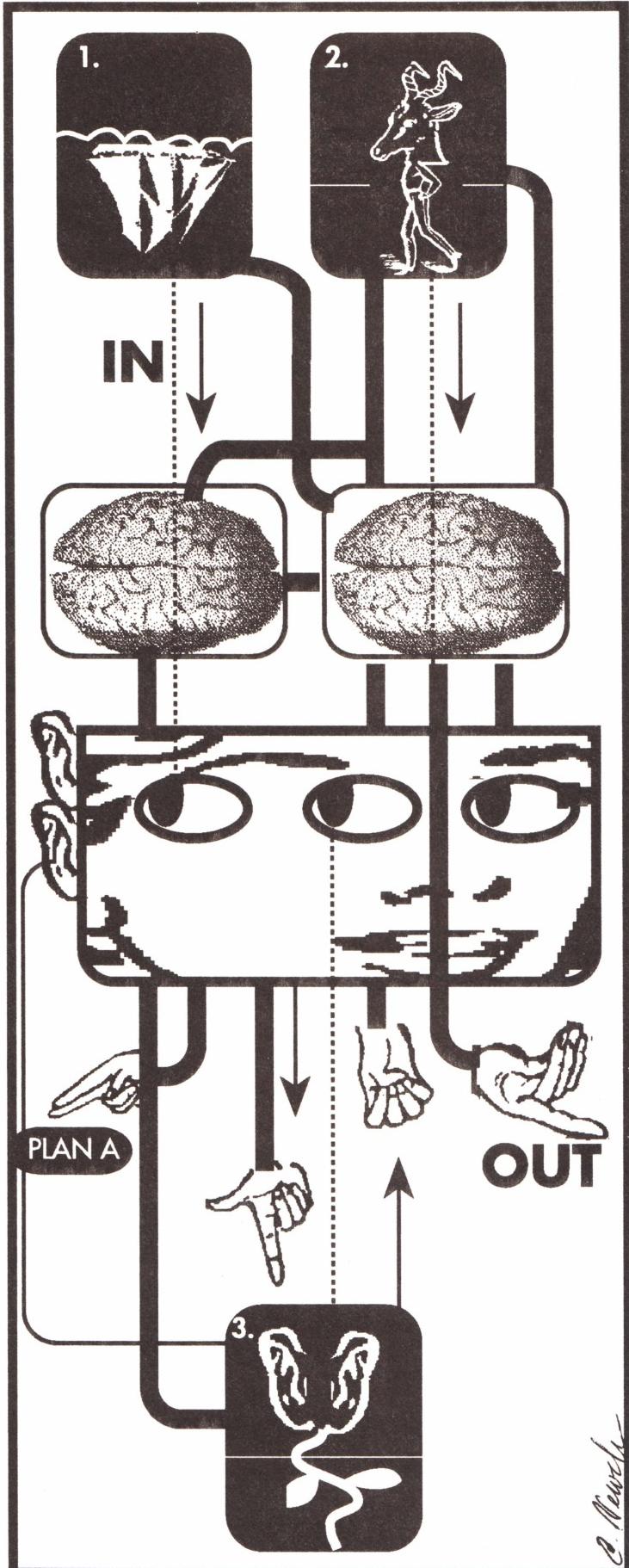
**On Your Screen** there comes flickering to life the Correspondent, in tan overcoat and Microphone, pinned down in the bright glare of the Maxicam light, outside the coliseum, where, tonight, everything is going to be decided. I sure hope we've tuned in, in time. The man says, "But first, here's some background:

"The Empire never ended," wrote Phil Dick in his revolutionary novel *Valis*. The so-called Roman Empire, that is... it is a very innaresting idea. Gives you a different perspective. The language and channels have changed of course, but that is mere magicians' patter: the underlying reality remains all too familiar... the eagle still glares balefully over the grim landscape. Look around: here's George Bush, former head of the Secret Police and lackey of the Weapons Cowboys, a minor emperor near the second, and final, fall of the Empire. Rabble-master Ronald Reagan is known *fondly* for briefly rekindling those flagging Imperial Energies for one last sunset flash (the camera pulls slowly away from the exquisitely carved initials "RR" on the mouldering sarcophagus door - which is slightly ajar, it seems. It is a quiet, summer day in the cemetery, bugs all floating in the thick yellow air... after a gelatinous moment of silence, we leave the plastic flowers in the rusted Hills Bros. coffee can and make our way solemnly down the gravel path....). Ronnie's farewell to America: a sop to a bored and frightened populace that wants nothing more than to be distracted - by anything! anything! - from discomfiting Millenarian thought. But they know.

# metanoids untie

by DOUGLAS CRACRAFT

Soon (the histories will continue) the secret cabal of weapons manufacturers, mafiosos, and bankers try to solidify its control of Rome, er, that is, Washington; the Centurions will maintain a presence abroad; at home new-fangled mind-control techniques and good old flat-of-the-sword repression are stepped up in what turns out to be, yes, a disastrously premature, and tragically excessive, crowd control effort. *The Empire can really do no less, you see; it is constrained, mystically, to overreact.* It is in sense the Empire's job. But after enthusiastic, laughing, crowds burn down the White House, a disgusted Jim Baker spits, "I guess they had one more good fight in them." Here's Alexander Scoresby intoning, solemnly, sorrowfully, on The American Heritage Special Final Days Presentation, haunting millions of



television sets that *no one is watching at all*: "With the destruction of most of Washington, D.C. in a chaotic and idiotic spasm, (film of people throwing rocks, molotov cocktails at the White House, the burning police cruisers and helicopters) the years of world prosperity and Pax Americana (shots from a series of romantic Hollywood war movies of the fifties) came to an ignominious end ..." It is *so sad*. But nothing compared to what will happen when, along with the "government," come crashing down the rest of our Precious Neurological Constructions. Where will it stop? *What will you do?* Who knows!?

In such a wickedly complicated picture, PhilDickian manicheanism can take us only so far, like maybe into the *Seventh Hell of Paranoia*. The best way to sidestep the paranoiac bandwagon and beat the heat in the nineties probably is to become what cultural historian William Irwin Thompson (in a different context, to be sure) calls a *Metanoid*. Now your traditional Paranoid has one (one at a time, at least) complete, all-encompassing system that explains, with varying degrees of success, everything. This much is familiar. We must not ignore however the recent sightings of the so-called Positive Paranoid, whose One System is (sensibly), benign, all-wise, and protective, e.g. belief in the Space Brothers, a religious mono-mania, The Lottery, u.s.w. This is for sure a more

pleasant version of paranoia, for all concerned, but it is really of no greater survival value than the other.

Now our new unit here, the *Metanoid*, can hold, and use, *several different models of reality at once* - and since *models of reality* are all we have, that's saying a lot! The Metanoid does not have all her survival readouts attached mechanically, habitually, to any one set of inputs. Hey - Things Change! One model gets a little squirrelly, no cause for alarm. Usually, when a model begins to fail, (e.g. look around) the Operator becomes a kind of control freak, trying to dampen out the increasingly severe anomalies and/or oscillations with the Dead Hand. Law 'n' Order. Traditional Values. We're seeing this happen. It is, in a nutshell, the crisis of our civilization: careening out of control, we try more and more self-defeating "adjustments" when it's obvious to the unimpressed that we're gonna get, gotta get, a whole new ballgame. What is ironic is that this "control" (William Powell, or another of those terribly self-assured Hollywood-of-the-1930s types, speaking casual, confident, to the up-till-now skeptical Board of Directors, his girlfriend's Pop's there, while outside, beyond the massive, darkened windows of the Sky Scraper, a grey city-thing grows monstrous, of its own accord, off-screen, the real star ...) was probably never more than an illusion, anyway. Maybe a lunatic on a freeway overpass waving his arms, directing traffic.

As things rumble towards crisis status, there's no question of having more control. Forget getting all your ducks in a row, as the schmaltzy IBM ads used to promise; what with that Last Wave maybe coming, we can't be talking 'bout nothing but *surfing*.

We've got to face it: we may not know who we are, where we are, or what we're doing. The script may not apply. For instance, here we are, in the Salvation Army store listening to - who is it? - Vic Damone? on an old station on an even older radio ... Up above the racks of polyester housecoats each with a herstory that would break your heart, the bad paintings of places that maybe



never even existed; the rows of forlorn old shoes, the aroma of old photographs rising from all those impossible old clothes. Is it just me? Doesn't it all seem a little bit funny-peculiar sometimes? Could any of this possibly be *real*? *How would we know*? How many different places, different times might we be in simultaneously? The metanoid polyphrenic with lucid tendencies knows that there might not be an answer to this question; she does know, however, that it is a *very* important question to ask. Your typical straight ticket voter, though, is, *on a daily basis* for crying out loud, starting to decompose, in a sense, boxing the corners of the "room" with their eyes, tugging at the collar with a nervous finger, palms sweating, thinking, "*I better go home and turn on the TV ....*"

#### Typical Scenarios Abound

Here we are in Frankenstein's Laboratory, as the lights flash and flicker, sparks race up and down the glass tubes, sheets of rain whip against the tower and thunder crashes over the ominous roar of the peasants making their torchlit way up the hill ...

production crews move the apocryphal Fan into position for the apocryphal Shit, which is going to get its cue momentarily. Our beloved precipice, toward which we have been racing unknowingly for thousands of years, leaps suddenly, cartoonlike, to the tips of our wriggling toes. For this scene, Igor's twisted, uplifted face is harshly lit, in a tableau of frozen, frightened, ecstasy.

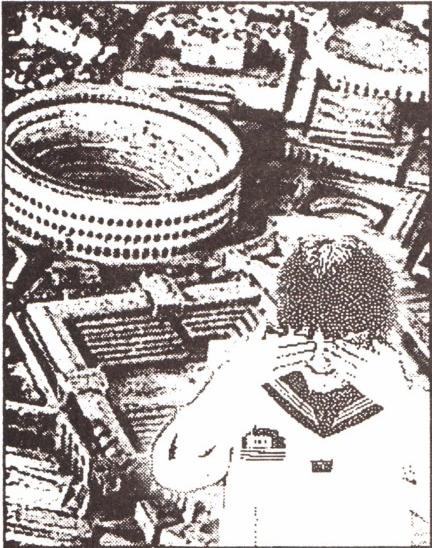
And ... In the eerily empty command

At bifurcation time, the smallest of inputs can have, uh, unpredictable effects.



post, a mile below the Colorado Rockies, the wall-sized screen flashes SYSTEM BREAKDOWN!! SYSTEM BREAKDOWN!! The General speaks coolly into the phone. "All bets are off," he says flatly. "We made a miscalculation." He slams down the receiver and walks quickly toward the Emergency Exit, trenchcoat over one shoulder, humming "Strangers in the Night." Of course we are. We always were. Exchanging glances, maybe.

What this *system breakdown* means in the cool, valueless terms of the dissipative systems science described by Nobel Prize winner Ilya Prigogine is that the world, in this *unstable high energy* state we seem to have here now, may be heading for a Bifurcation Point\*, where, if we're lucky and smart, a new kind of order will arise from the wreckage of the Old World. Whew! At bifurcation time, the *smallest* of inputs can have, uh, *unpredictable* effects. "Dodgy, very dodgy," mumbles Brigadier Pudding, looking out the window of the Veterans' Home to the dismal area known as Town Square. The stunted maple trees dead in their pots; tattered posters blow up against the motionless legs of the men seated there. He's worried, are you?



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So if we are paying too much attention to any simplistic soccer-game theory of history or current events, the more radical and unpredictable things get (and here drop the needle on Karen Carpenter singing "We've Only Just Begun"), the more *helpless and confused* we will perform become. It will Stop Making Sense, as so many people seem to have decided already, opting then for a nice safe hobby or maybe Prophylactic Nostalgia, pathetic trance-like efforts to *push it all away*. I don't imagine that this strategy will work, and probably, that bargain-basement single purpose simulation-of-reality will just stretch and shred in the first hard rain, and then finally crumble under what will seem some *unimaginable Godzilllic disaster* that not even shirtless Charlton Heston can pull us out of. Charlton Heston will probably have other fish to fry.

Everybody has to dance.  
And, Now This. •

\* A system in a high energy (dissipative) state, as it moves closer to a chaotic state, can often move into a new, more energetic, more ordered state. The point at which this "decision" is made is called the bifurcation point. See *Order Out of Chaos* by Ilya Prigogine and Isobel Stengers.

### Beat Science Poetry Corner

by Luke McGuff

*Science News*, June 24, 1989, pp. 393-394

Heat regulation in the voodoo lily is accomplished by metabolic reactions in the shikimic acid pathways.

*Scientific American*, August, 1989, p. 120

Blue-green Neptune looms out of the blackness of space into the digitized optical ken of Voyager 2.

*Scientific American*, October, 1989, p. 101

Atoms are aligned like beads in a scanning, tunneling microscope image of a sample of gallium arsenide. •



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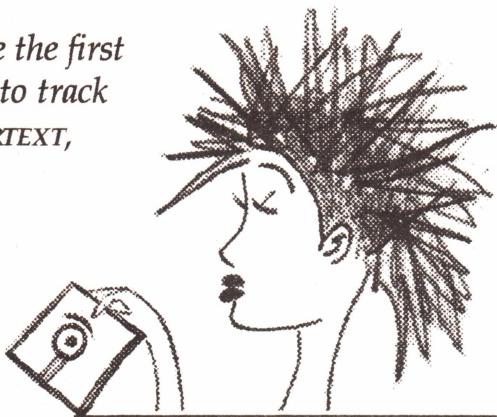
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*Giving the C-word the Slip*

# lewis shiner interview

by Carla Frauenfelder

**L**ewis Shiner is a novelist who won't be pinned down. If you think you know what he's all about after reading one of his books, think (or read) again. His works include the cyberpunkish (don't tell him I labeled it as such) *Frontera*, the magical-realistic *Deserted Cities of the Heart*, and his latest book, *Slam*, which comes closest to the slipstream genre.

Shiner is also the editor of *When the Music's Over*, an anthology of stories dedicated to peace. Its writers include Bruce Sterling, Robert Anton Wilson, John Shirley, Don Webb, and many other hip authors whom *bOING-bOING* would be proud to publish. Unfortunately, it came out at a time when an evil spell altered the minds of millions of Americans, making them believe that the price of oil was more important than human lives. A book full of stories against war and violence, therefore, didn't fit into the new reality that had overtaken these malleable minds, and the anthology was sent to a quiet death. Any money Shiner did make from the book was given to Greenpeace. - Carla Frauenfelder

**boING boING:** I'm reading *Deserted Cities* now - It's pretty cool. It's different than *Slam*.

**Lewis Shiner:** Whether it's a curse or a blessing, all of my books are different. None of them are even in the same category or genre.

**That's good, but do you think you'll do another one like *Slam*? I**



MIRIAM BERKLEY  
©

*loved the style, genre, and feeling of it.*

Well, I don't want to predict. I enjoyed *Slam*, I'm proud of it, but I've gone on to other things. Most of what I do in writing is a process of getting sick of things, and it's a combination of what I write and what I read. So when I read something about ten different times that some other writer's done, and then I find myself doing it, I get sick of it and I try to change horses. Basically, that's the story with all my books.

I got interested and enthused about science fiction in the early eighties, when Bill Gibson was

publishing his first few short stories, and I got to meet him. I was hanging out with Bruce Sterling and all that.

**How did you meet those guys?**

Well, I kind of dropped out of everything in 1979. I was working in computers, and I quit my job. I was living alone, I didn't have any expenses, and I socked a bunch of money in the bank. I went

to Mexico for two months, which is where I did a lot of research for *Deserted Cities*.

So when I came back from Mexico, all my stuff was in storage. I had sold my car, and I could go anywhere I wanted to. I had met a lot of the Austin writers at various conventions around the state, and I decided that that was where I wanted to be. I liked Austin.

I met Gibson in, I guess '82, because he and Sterling had already struck up a correspondence, and he came to Austin for a convention and we really hit it off. Bruce had turned me on to



**SLAM**  
Lewis Shiner  
1990  
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ISBN 0-553-35449-3

Lewis Shiner, one of the original members of "The Movement" (a loose-knit group of front-wave cyberpunk authors including William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, Rudy Rucker and John Shirley) has been writing "slipstream" lately, which Shiner describes as fiction that's "not quite SF, but too weird to be mainstream."

Shiner slips entirely out of the SF genre in his most recent novel *Slam*, which examines some of the real-life phenomena that inspired the cyberpunks - anarchy, bored youth, personal computers, punk rock, skateboarding and the Do-It-Yourself ethic.

David Stokes, *Slam*'s protagonist, is a 39-year-old ex-record store employee who's just finished a six-month prison stint for tax-evasion. He moves to Galveston TX, where he's greeted by old friends he can't relate with any longer - former idealists running on working-stiff treadmills and shunting their rebellious energies over to weekend beer & poker parties.

Stokes' stay in the cross-bar motel has infected him with a bleak outlook for the future. It seems to him that the only way he'll avoid being sent back to the slam is by joining the ranks of carrot-and-stick zombies like his college buddies have. But an encounter with a group of teenage squatters occupying a condemned mansion points Stokes in a direction he never knew existed.

*Slam*'s tight pacing, black comedy and tension-building make it fun to read. It's a positive story of the liberating energy that emanates from the apolitical DIY underground. - Mark Frauenfelder

his short stories, and for a while there, science fiction seemed really hot and fun. I did it, and then after I had written *Frontera*, my first novel, I kept seeing stuff that I'd done in other places, not necessarily written after mine, but I was just too much in the mainstream with a lot of other stuff that was going on. I felt I was in a rut and I wanted to do

something really different.

I've had a love/hate relationship with science fiction pretty much all along. I mean, I like the idea that it can be really crazy. Like Rudy Rucker is obviously one of the people that you guys like, and he's a friend of mine, and one of the SF writers that I really admire.

Well when I read *Slam*, I thought of Rudy Rucker, and then later on I read that you were associated with him somehow, and Mark told me that you knew each other. But I didn't know that at the time, and I was thinking, "this reminds me of Rudy Rucker."

Yeah, Rudy's a self-taught anarchist, I guess you can say. He's really crazy, and he has absolutely no ability to respect authority at any level. I really love that in him, and I think you can see it a lot in his writing. He's always going off on odd tangents, finding new territories. So he's one of the people I'll always read.

My first experience with Rudy Rucker in person: He was giving a reading at a convention, and I walk in, and he is reading this scene from the *Sex Sphere* - I don't know if you've read that.

**Yeah, I have.**

Okay, so he's reading one of the scenes, in which this giant, disembodied six-foot-tall female sex organ has materialized in this room and begins talking to him. And so Rudy is just blandly reading the scene, and at one point he looks up, sees that there's a bunch of kids and teenagers, and people in their 40's and 50's in the room, he looks around, slaps himself on the face, and says, "I'm so ashamed," and then goes back and starts reading again. It was really hysterical, you know, here's this guy who looks like, at that point, a college professor with short hair and glasses, and dresses pretty nice when he's at conventions, and just looks like Mr. College Professor, while reading this totally bizarre stuff. Just gently mocking himself but plowing right ahead. That's Rudy all over. Every once in a while he'll realize that he's behaving really weirdly, and he doesn't care.

*That's so funny - he's great. It seems like I can feel his personality when I'm reading his stuff. Of course I don't know if I am, but...*

Well I think that's one of the best things. I mean, he's a big advocate of doing autobiographical stuff - "transrealism" he calls it. So part of his deal in this transrealism is that you're supposed to use yourself as characters, and people you know as characters, and have incidents that grow out of your life, and that autobiographical aspect is another thing I like about him.

*Well I feel that with you too. I felt like I really knew your characters.*

I do base my characters on people I've known. The woman, Lindsey, in *Deserted Cities of the Heart*, was based on my high-school girlfriend.

Terrell is also more or less a real character. I always run in the mornings, and there was this apartment house that I'd run by every morning, and that car used to be parked out front, with "Terrell" written in green dripping letters on the side of it. And there was this guy, like the guy I described as Terrell in the book, who I'd see with the car every once in a while, so I just assumed that was his name. One day, he showed up and somebody had spray painted his name out with black paint, so I went and wrote that in my book.

*I loved Terrell! That whole thing with him and the car was hysterical. I was reading it at my mom's house, laughing out loud, and she could hear me from the other room - I felt like a crazy person, laughing to myself.*

That's great. That's the reaction I wanted. There were people who didn't understand that the book was supposed to be funny. I'm glad you did.

*When you're writing, do you have any specific audience in mind, or do you just write?*

Well I have to write for myself. I have to write to entertain myself. I'm now living with - common law married to - this woman who I've been friends with since high school, basically. We got together over a year ago, and she's very influential in my work right now.

But first and foremost it's got to be me. I've got to write stuff that keeps me interested. I get bored very easily with my own work.

*It's funny that you get bored with your own work.*

Well, I don't know, I think it's a good thing really.

*Well it's good because you'll always progress. I know too many people who keep on saying the same thing.*

That's why I think it's good - it does keep me moving. Like in *Slam*, there's a lot of stuff that happens in very few pages.

*How did you learn about the skateboarding scene?*

I'd see all these skaters around, and I was really interested in the culture. There was a woman that my ex-wife worked with who was a cook. She dropped out of that and got into the skating thing full time, then disappeared. I thought that was sort of weird and mysterious. Then, there was this story in *Rolling Stone* a few years ago about *Thrasher* and the skate culture. I didn't know what I was going to do with it, but I knew I had to do something, so I started reading *Thrasher*.

*I didn't realize the skate culture was still going on so strong. I thought skateboarding had kind of gone out. It was fun reading about it in *Slam*.*

**Q:**

*Do you think of cyberpunk as more than just a literary movement?*

**A:**

Well, the thing is, Bruce Sterling should have trademarked the word when he had the chance. He could have and he didn't.

I don't see it as much as I used to, but I don't know where the Houston skaters go. I knew where the hot beds of skating activities were in Austin, and I think it's still happening. I hope it is, because I think it's a cool thing. And I don't think it's going to go away. One of the beauties of it all is the invisibility of these cultures - the bulletin board culture, the skate culture . . . they're there under authority's nose, but authority doesn't see them.

*I was reading somewhere that you refer to cyberpunk as the C-word. Why does it turn you off?*

Well, at first when all the stuff was being written about it, it was good for me, and I was suddenly getting a lot of free publicity. I was being lumped with writers like Gibson and Sterling, who already had a much more established reputation than I did. So that kind of pulled me along on their coattails for a while, and that was great. It meant that I got a lot of sales and a lot of press, and all that kind of stuff. I had written *Frontera*, which was very cyberpunk in many ways.

But at the same time I was already tired of a lot of things which had become clichés in the

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genre. And the older I got and the more I read and the more other stuff I did, the more distant I felt about it. I'm not really as fascinated with technology as people like Sterling and Gibson are. It's interesting, but I kind of said all I have to say about it then. I guess it's just my way of trying to keep people from having a lot of expectations. I don't want people to just assume that if they pick up a Lew Shiner novel it's going to have any resemblance to either *Frontera* or anything that any of the other writers that are called cyberpunk are doing.

### What about the term "slipstream?"

Now that I like. That's another of Bruce's inventions. It's the kind of thing where I had been reading all these books that Bruce was calling slipstream, and he created the term for an article he was writing in *SF Eye*. And when he started working on it, he called me up to get a list of books that would go in that genre, and that's something I feel comfortable with. It's not as restrictive as something like cyberpunk, or even SF.

I wrote a review of a book called *Dream Science* by Thomas Palmer, and I was trying to pin down what it was that made this book special, and what I think is that it takes its reality on a micro-level. In other words, all the characters are very real, and the things that they do are things that real people would do, and they have all the problems that people have. They have marriages and families and houses and pets and all that kind of stuff. But on the macro-level things get really weird.

Whereas science fiction is the opposite. The unreality is always on the personal level. These people are all weird, and they

don't seem to relate to the present day. On the big scheme of things the same old laws seem to operate. There's always these galactic empires - I'm talking about bad science fiction, of course - you've got galactic empires, you've got the same old laws of cause and effect we've always seen, you've got generally a lot of sexism. All the people in power are men, there's a lot of implicit racism and all that kind of stuff. So on the big level it's all the same old shit, and it's only on the little, the micro-level, the personal level that things are weird. And it's weird because a lot of the writers aren't very well socialized and don't understand the problems of real people.

So for me, slipstream is really comfortable, and the novel I'm working on now is very much in that tradition. It's like *Dream Science*, or *Replay* by Ken Grinwood, or books like that, which in terms of the characters, the main character is me. It's really autobiographical, it has to do with my father's death, my divorce last year, and that kind of stuff.

### And what book is this?

This is a novel in progress. It's called *Glimpses*, and it's going to be out in '93.

### And it's different than the other three books you've written?

Oh yeah, real different. Like I say, it's very very real on the personal level. I spent a lot of time doing telephone interviews with people. There's a friend of mine, he's a fan named Paul Bradshaw, who had an accident I guess in his early twenties that left him in a wheelchair, and the circumstances that led to that, and the things that have affected his life, are very appropriate to the thematic things that are going on. So I called up Paul and said,

"Look, I'd like to base this character on you," and I interviewed him and taped his life's story basically, and put it straight into the book. And I did a bunch of interviews with other people - there's also a rock and roll element, and I interviewed Jimi Hendrix's father and Marianne Faithfull . . .

**Wow, how come you have them in there?**

Well that's the slipstream element. This character who is based so much on me is not able to deal with his father's death and with his whole family problem. So he, through a sort of fantasy element, gets involved with three major rock stars who have had similar family problems. Jimi Hendrix, Brian Wilson, and Jim Morrison. So that element of those larger than life characters, who were dealing essentially with the same problems, that's how he deals with his problems.

**Do you think of cyberpunk as more than just a literary movement?**

Well, the thing is, Bruce Sterling should have trademarked the word when he had the chance. He could have and he didn't.

**I didn't know he was the one who coined it.**

Well, as far as the official history goes, the best knowledge that anybody has, there was a science fiction writer named Bruce Bethke, and he had a story called "Cyberpunk" in like 1983. Gardner Dozois, who's generally credited with having invented it, had written an introduction to one of his year's best, and it was published in the *Washington Post*, and that's generally credited as the first use, but then Bethke mentioned that he had had this story out, and it was in Asimov. Gardner had published it, and admitted that he had probably

gotten it from Bethke - so that's where it all came from. From Bethke to Dozois.

But Sterling was the one who really hopped on the bandwagon and started promoting it. He did the *Mirrorshades* anthology and all that. If he had his way, yeah, it would just be a literary movement, but the truth of it is, history is going to make its own decisions, and already the word's been appropriated by a bunch of different people, including these weird avant-garde New York musicians, and a lot of hackers are now calling themselves cyberpunk.

**Yeah, we get a lot of albums sent to us by artists who call their music cyberpunk.**

Well, I guess they've got as much right as anybody to use it, and people who want to call themselves that can call themselves that, and in 100 years from now or whatever, history will have decided who's what. I think it's already gotten completely out of Bruce's hands. A lot of people have now heard the word, and they don't think of it as being just a literary movement. They have this image of people who are into computers, and yet listen to loud weird music. So I think it's entered the culture at that level, and it's too late to say it's just a literary movement anymore.

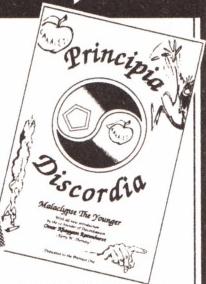
**So why does that bother you?**

It's not that it bothers me so much. If people want to be into cyberpunk, that's cool, it's just that I think cyberpunk - what it espouses - is kind of dehumanizing.

**How?**

It's like, the whole virtual reality thing doesn't appeal to me, it's just a big video game. I think that the world is in a lot of trouble, and we need to have human

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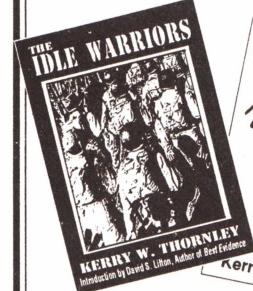
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contact. People have got to learn to talk to each other, and holing up in some individual virtual reality behind locked doors somewhere is not going to help things.

#### **Even if it's used as entertainment?**

Well entertainment can be educational too, and that's the only kind of entertainment that really interests me. I'm not interested in passive entertainment and stuff that just wastes time. I'm interested in entertainment that challenges me.

#### **But skateboarding isn't educational.**

Well I think that it is. First of all, most people don't skate completely by themselves, most people skate with their friends. Secondly, when you're skateboarding, you are actually traveling - you have a form of transportation that is ecologically extremely sound. You're not burning gasoline, you're not

polluting the environment, or anything. You're under your own power, and it's terrific exercise. If you've tried it you'll know you really use your legs. The guys who are doing tricks, these guys are incredible athletes.

So I think skateboarding's great, and I would love to see people skateboarding rather than playing video games. And that's what cyberpunk is - a big video game. Technology is not going to solve our problems, technology is creating more and more problems all the time.

#### **What about bulletin boards? They're part of technology.**

Okay, okay. I'll grant you that, I've gone too far (laughs). Bulletin boards are a good tool for increasing communications, and they can be part of the solution.

**Well, there's no black and white. I think there's a lot of validity in what you're saying, but I also think there are some things that**

**are really cool about technology.**

Technology can be cool, but it's gotten us in a hell of a mess.

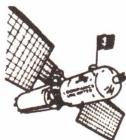
**Yeah, it depends on how it's used.**

Now the computer is one of the greatest tools that human beings have ever had, and we will need computers to solve the problems that we've got, so yeah, I'm not a Luddite, I'm not saying disavow technology, but technology as an escape per se in something like virtual reality doesn't appeal to me. I want to see technology in ways that will be more ecological, and less destructive. •

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"you can stay there, Madeline!" - Porphyro

## The air was a thick Amber cream...

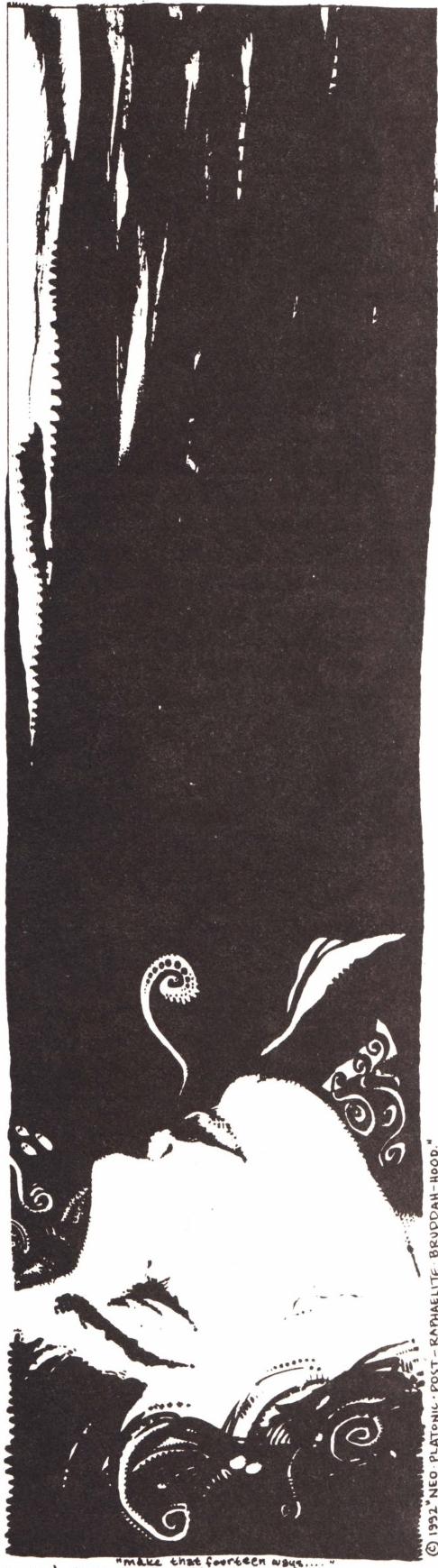
Dark and smoky. My mouth was dry, and my head silent. On each side of me: an acquaintance behind and around them, syrup and mulled, the Subculture vultures, their heads suspended between black cotton rags and alter-red hairtops. Cigarettes in every mouth, as if they were meant to be eaten shortly. I kept my face down, responding to the changing intlections with "uh-huh's", and "yeah's". All of them talking to each other at the same time. Each of them knowing that they were the only ones listening to their own raspy, hacking voices and those of the cables next to us. *2020* lay across your red velvet ivory Cleopatra. A white porcelain tea set at your side. My eyes sewn with pink laser thread to your shape - against the wallpaper. A shadow of peacock feathered wings shot from behind your polka-dot draped shoulderblades, as if painted up the wall, traversing the ceiling down, the very tips covering my vision. The winged blindfold wiped the cafe clear of every soul, leaving us. And two chairs. Turning the teacup in your hands, you began to sing. No sound emanated, only two stained glass butterflies, slowly fell from between the dewy cocoons of your lips, their leafwing flutters beating out the sound of my father's voice. Faeries of liquid circuitry appeared carrying pen and paper - laying them in my kiss-hungry palms. Powered by water-wheels, the tears of lost love's dead, moaned my hand. I wrote to you knowing I'd never taste diamonds pitted peaches lest I did. Sticky lightning, they returned, the walking, chattering bare branches - breast feeding from their camels. I arose from where I was so securely seated, and initiated what I knew would be days and nights of electric swirl bubbles (holding your breath), and the hairs on the back of your neck.

I heard your voice five days later, waiting for me inside my phone.

It's one hundred conversations, fifty teacups, twenty-five dresses, and one kiss later.

I still wait to hear your footprints cross the dandelion carpet, wet with morning sun.

written, photographed & rendered by  
M. KIMBALL MINNEY  
FOR LA BRISA. 1.92.  
thanks for the delicious coincidence - tea & a note.  
(But I'm not thirsty anymore) - electronic love letters straight from your heart (of darkness) "apocalypse when?"



# *conscious mystic knowledge gee*

*ngulfing  
another  
somber  
antioxidant*

*lunch, I get a frantic*

*call from Larri Lawrence  
Sergic, MD. Fighting  
background noise from  
cellular hell, I hear the  
gentle rumblings of the  
L-Man's '92 Porsche Turbo  
blazing down a squalid  
Houston beltway on a dire  
emergency call to some  
generic southland funny  
farm. "Get here quick."  
Could be the confused  
state of my choline-  
jumpered brain, but  
judging from the pale of  
the psychiatrist's  
screams, this has got to  
be important. So we're  
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by  
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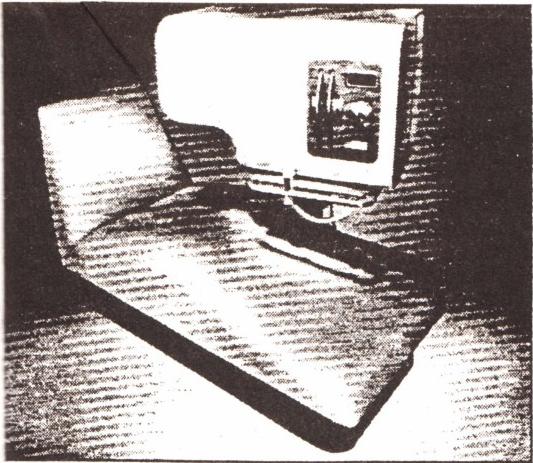
## **Fry the Fiendly Scries ....**

Three hours later, I find myself gliding the Airline That Love Built on a trajectory into the City That Oilfield-Rape Built. More freeways, more crazed diatribes about using Neuro-Linguistic Programming to hypnotize prosecutors during cross-examination, the Porsche propels our DNA suits onward through the swarms to a mysterious rendez-view with one of Houston's hottest head labs. Inside the Georgia O'Keefe-meets-aromatherapy office building, I get shuffled through a door marked "Meta Center" and introduced to a clinical staff directed by one amiable Nancy E. White, Ph.D. [1]

Wow. Dr. Nancy has put together quite a collection of high-ticket clinical brain candy. Her staff's mission is to employ neuro-feed-back training by using "computer-assisted monitoring equipment which help patients achieve brain wave patterns associated with neurochemical balance." *Ergo, mutatis maximus.*

By now you've run across brain toys, flashing goggles, the excellent *Day Dreamer*, etc. Okay, imagine being guided by pro shrinks through "It's A Small World" full of mental munchies on a carrot-and-slick basis (or a whips-and-leathers basis, depending solely on your metaphorical preference). As you grok, they assist. Staff seemed good at high-touch hypno-tech, like NLP, as well.

Frankly, the Meta People don't want to diagnose your problem and prescribe twice your credit limit worth of Prozac. No, instead they wire up your head and let you come to balance and resolution on your own sweet neuroelectronic sliding time scale. Don't worry, the meter is running; remember the Porsche out in the lot? Even so, success rates show drastic benefits over the Eli-Lilly-Memorial pogrom commonly



The Lumatron L.E.S.

found in therapy. In fact, the Meta Center's showcase method, *BWT*, has effectively treated alcoholism, post-traumatic stress disorder, manic depression, even Epstein-Barr syndrome, using neuroelectronics! [2]

Wandering about the complex for sideshow toyz, we greet the *Alpha Chamber™ System*, a cross pollination between a sens-dep tank and the orgasmatron in *Sleeper*. Imagine, if you will, a *Laz-Y-Boy™* recliner nestled deep within the comfort of a two meter plasticine dodo egg, complete with built-in speakers and a nice oval hole cut in the front for access.

Settling in, I begin to feel strangely, comfortably isolated. *Flashback time: San Antonio's Riverwalk features a great place to have public sex just at the north end: a giant tree with forked trunk right next to the busy main sidewalk.*

*Twin trunks perform a lovely encapsulating Feng-Shui space perfect for a happy couple to frolic within full view, but strangely enough busy peds don't bother to notice. The partial egg shape of the tree hollow produces a "conceptual safe haven." and seems to accen28 good feelings.*

Likewise, *Alpha Chamber™* blocks out most non-visible traces of our everyday egotistically-induced adrenaline cultural trance. So if you run out of Inderal, get one of these *Alpha Chamber™* units for the front room of your mortgaged three-bedroom love nest in the 'burbs. Preflight checklist for your next therapy session: stick a fave video mantra in the VCR, crank up the New-Edge tunes, wire on the EEG cap and slip into your *Alpha Chamber™* neuro-iso-womb!

The adjacent room features a *Lumatron L.E.S.*, pioneered by Dr. John Downing. Imagine a *Day Dreamer* built into the general size, shape, cost and taste of an ACME electron microscope. Dr. John spent 20 years flashing colored geometries onto volunteered retinas in order to form new synaptic connections, changes in biorhythms, enhanced intellectual capacity and emotional well-being. Meta Center staffers related their favorite story of the Lumatron Kid, one pre-adolescent Houston hyperoid who linked onto Dr. John's device, then gave up killing the neighbors' cats in favor of begging, "Can we go see the Light again today, Mommy?" each day after school.

Next comes the *Somatron™*. Here you need envision a three-way cross between an air hockey table, a massage bench and a rack mount full of JVC audiogear. (Okay, who goes first?) The literature proclaims it as "a brilliantly conceived musical body instrument that converts sound into high intensity vibrations. Sound is perceived not only by the ears, but by the entire body ... with your entire being receiving a cellular massage." It's supposed to cut stress, along the same lines as *Alpha Chamber™*; I jack in my Nirvana tape and crank "Lithium," but the staff doesn't seem to grasp the implied humor.

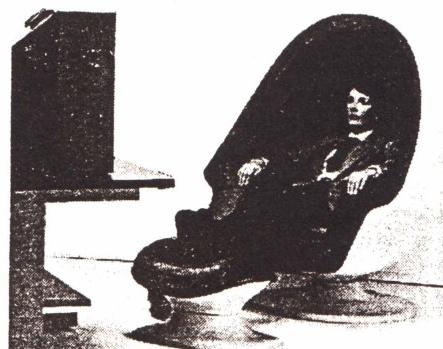
#### BWT: Brain-Wave Training

In the back room I find Larri wired up, as usual, ready to sample *BWT*. There he lays: bow-tie, sweater vest, two tix to the opera, and a couple vials of Piracetam hidden next to a hermetic talisman in his left pocket; all neatly wrapped in a retrofit dentist's chair. Affixed to Larri's occipital lobes are several EEG transducers. A pair of Bose speakers glide dangerously close to his ears. Wires lead from the chair into a turnkey PC with some outboard data I/O device.

Lights go down, the screen launches into a scrolling bar chart display of Larri's Alpha/Theta brainwave ratios, gentle hums emit from the Bose speakers through an incense-laden atmosphere as a sour Meta Center priestess initiates the ritual. Taking him

down with Ericksonian hypno-tech, she instructs Harvard-Boy into an alert Theta state, where he can get clued via screen display and MIDI synthesis feedback to elicit brainwave patterns gnormally not found among the conscious. [Ibid. 2]

Herein lies a problem. People generally know how to deal with nightmares; therapists conduct deep sessions on unstable sorts; meta-apes respond well to heavy emotions during group encounter; etc., but most non-mutants just can't deal with having a machine pull shit out of their heads. Lysergic, fungus, etc., tend to create socio-empathetic loops for support, providing built-in mechanisms to help one contend as hir brain floats out of fixed, comfortable paths to weave a new neuritic web. Recall how satisfying it feels to hang around people you trip with, even for days afterwards. Other brain emancipation rituals such as Yoga,



witchcraft, ceremonial magic, Dead shows and Trek conventions also provide socio-emotional support to complement re-imprint sorties.

But not the machines. Meta staffers lament how patients come in, strap on and wig out. Simple detox sessions suddenly turn into deep emotional recalls of child-abuse, rape, etc., and the electronics appear to pull the deepest parts out faster than anticipated. I remember an anecdote about John Lilly permanently halting one sens-dep project involving a suspended chair because it just worked too well and participants couldn't deal with it.

So it appears that electronics can pull you into a place where other people don't seem to help, which leads me to wonder ... what about empathetic loops



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experienced on the Net? People even get withdrawal symptoms from lack of Netnews these days. It's a matter of case history that otherwise conservative white collar types tend to cut loose into elated/violent email memo tirades once they figure out that machines have disembodied them from a sense of physical threat.

Could this imply an emerging system of exploration for our evolutionary branch? Electronic-based hallucination augmented by electronic-based social support. They just need to stick a modem, a keyboard and some chat software onto the Alpha-Theta unit; we can provide plenty of *bOINGeroid* volunteers! Brain candy and group therapy courtesy of your local X.25 pipe, in sort of a one stop neuroelectronic superstore. Sounds like Wm. Gibson's unspeakable C-word tome ....

A full replete of the Meta Center would not be complete without a few gotchas. First off, Nancy & her pals love to bash neureonauts. Shame, shame shaman. Babbling incessantly about the "lack of effect from non-professional equipment" [ie. brain-toys], and how "you really shouldn't try this at home" [without paying standard scale to a state-registered counselor on an hourly basis] made me nervous. Furthermore, their literature talks about "curing" people of hallucinogen addiction! Ululant tripe and physiologically irrelevant. Bottom line is the Meta Folx know how to tweak your head with hardware, but it kosts majur bux.

On the other side of the geo-economic coordinate system, cyber-shaman Eric Gullichsen from *Sense8* tipped me off a while back about a project called *Biomuse* at our old alma-mater Snodfart Univ. Robert Campanell talked about these folks last issue: muscle- and brain-wave gozinto mapped with MIDI gozout. Very cool frood.

Walking around the Meta Center, I envisioned a weird neurotropic primordial soup scattered about the planet, wherein upscale, industrial strength brain augmentation equipment can be found concentrated in places like the proto-yuppy Meta Center and intellectual aquarias such as Stanford,

just ready to self-organize and execute a first crawl out of the slime. Not to knock the pros, but given some daring you could be doing this in your garage.

"Head like a hole ... I'd rather die than give you control ...." -  
Nine Inch Nails.

MIDI on your muscles, body electronic input, retinal strobes ... The mechanix of building a giant egg to sit in are one thing, but assembling the street-tech necessary for a multi-media neuroinfotainment salon like Meta Center should be rather easy. Of course, EEG signals are very weak, you'll find problems in acquisition and filtering. But like the biomuse folks, you can hack with other cyber psignals; DNA has provided even non-mutants with many electro-poems. Electromuscular vibes (EMG or electromyograms), for example, are fun to use:

**Step 1:** Login to the online library catalog of your local center for getting-higher education and search for biomed eng or EE master theses with keys EKG, EMG. Luckily, grad students are required to draw circuit designs, show flow charts, list sample input and append source code listings. [3]

**Step 2:** Get a data I/O acquisition board for your PC. I got an 8-channel Lab-NB from National Instruments for less than \$1K to slip in my Mac. They include source code in C for drivers to reach the board. [4]

**Step 3:** Opcode Systems sells MIDI software called *Max* that maps data I/O to MIDI. It's really powerful and the graphics are great. If you can write C programs, you can develop plug-in modules for Max that will filter and modulate I/O streams. [5]

**Step 4:** MIDI devices are cheap and frequently tossed; check the classifieds for used keyboards. A company called Paia Electronics even sells electronics kits real cheap to convert incoming MIDI signals into regular old control voltages so you can wire up to play sonatas on your microwave toaster-oven for about \$300. [6]

**Step 5:** Happy Candlemas. Wire it together, take some smart drugs and start hacking. Remember the gold earrings, elastic and KY Jelly last issue?

Use these to pull some EMG into your PC, cross the information via *Max* to a MIDI unit, set the dial to 23 and play a bass piccolo with your biceps.

Back to Houston ... Larri had a nice session, not too rough, but then he's an experienced neuroelectrochemical warlock. I tried to observe without going under, hard work considering all the hypnotic elements in the room. This is good, since I'll need to be semi-conscious to reply to your email: [74020.2145@compuserve.com](mailto:74020.2145@compuserve.com).

Lemme hear about your neuroelectrony experiences and brain toy wars; I'll investigate and dutifully report your whereabouts here and to the CIA.

Meta Center and *BWT* both get three stars in the *Xanderism Guide To Psychoactive Electronics*. If you possess the bucks and the need to kick a bad cybernetic loop, by all means call Dr. Nancy and save your pharmacological quotas for recreation.\*

### Indnotz

[1] Texas Meta Corp., 4600 Post Oak Place, Suite 301, Houston, TX 77027, 713/552-0091

[2] Eugene Peniston & Paul Kulkosky "Alcoholic Personality and Alpha-Theta Brainwave Training" *Medical Psychotherapy* 1990, Volume 3, pp. 37-55

[3] Jose Angel Aranda Sierra "General Purpose Biomedical Signal Analysis Software Package For Small Office Computers" Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of Texas, Austin 1982, AR 14800, 521-3042 (Univ. Microfilms)

[4] National Instruments Corp., 6504 Bridge Point Parkway, Austin, TX 78730-5039, 800/433-3488

[5] Opcode Systems, 3641 Haven Drive, Suite A, Menlo Park, CA 94024, 415/369-8131

[6] PAIA Electronics, Inc., 3200 Teakwood Ln, Edmond, OK 73013, 405/340-6300 .

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**Number 2:** Cover and centerfold in four-color glory by Michael Dougan, illustrating Tim Cahill's "Simple Rules." Lynda Barry's "Eric Pook's Comeeck" makes its first appearance, and J.R. Williams's "The Bad Boys" reoccurs. Video critic Fred Hopkins's first column. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh, Chuck Shepherd and Theron Yeager. Drew Friedman's masterful cartoon treatment of Harvey Pekar's "Rabbi's Wife," and artwork by Carel Moiseiwitsch, Peter Bagge, Robert Crumb and Mark Zingarelli. Art direction by Art Chantry and design consultation by  $\Delta$ .

**Number 3:** Cover and centerfold by Carel Moiseiwitsch, illustrating Bill Cardoso's "Dead Wild Horses." "A Personal History of Modern Israel" by Harvey Pekar. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh (great Roy Orbison photo!), Fred Hopkins and Chuck Shepherd. Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry and J.R. Williams, and artwork by Michael Dougan, Holly Tuttle, Drew Friedman, Fred Andrews, Jessica Dodge and Mark Zingarelli. Great Elvis section. Art direction by Art Chantry. **Number 4:** Cover and centerfold by Peter Bagge, illustrating Harvey Pekar's "Keep the Heat on Reagan." "Baseball Astrology" by Buddha Berman, and columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh, Fred Hopkins and Chuck Shepherd. Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry and J.R. Williams. Artwork by Michael Dougan, Tammy Fujihara, Drew Friedman, and Mark Zingarelli. Design direction by  $\Delta$ .

**Number 5:** Cover and centerfold by Drew Friedman, illustrating Ivan Stang's "Are You a Moe, a Curly...or Merely a Larry?" "The Three Stooges and Then Some" by Fred Hopkins and John Black. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh and Chuck Shepherd. Mark Newgarden's "The Little Nun" joins the strips by Lynda Barry and J.R. Williams. Artwork by Carel Moiseiwitsch, Michael Dougan, Holly Tuttle, Willow B. Norris and Mark Zingarelli. Art direction by Art Chantry and design consultation by  $\Delta$ .

**Number 6:** Cover from Carol Lay's "Grunge 361" centerfold, with Esther Herst's "Pro Choice Pro Bono." Alison Bechdel's rendering of Harvey Pekar's "Gallantry" joins cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Fred Hopkins, Buddha Berman, Dave Marsh and Chuck Shepherd. Artwork by Holly Tuttle, Michael Dougan, Stan Shaw and Mark Zingarelli. Photo of Ms. LaZonga by Cam Garrett with interview by Louie Rafflower. Art direction by Art Chantry and design consultation by  $\Delta$ . Ms. Lay's artwork was placed in the American Institute of Graphic Art's political graphics show.

**Number 7:** Cover and centerfold by J.R. Williams, illustrating Dr. Hunter S. Thompson's "Don't Tread On Me." Alison Bechdel's treatment of Harvey Pekar's "Free Association." J. Dooley's "Stone Age to Space Age." "True Reality Rock Report" by Al Larsen. Columns by Fred Hopkins, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh, Buddha Berman and Chuck Shepherd. Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry and Mark Newgarden. Artwork by Michael Dougan, Maurice Wright and Mark Zingarelli. Art direction by Art Chantry and design consultation by  $\Delta$ .

**Number 8:** Cover and centerfold by Holly Tuttle, illustrating W. P. Kinsella's "The Reports Concerning the Death of the Seattle Albatross Are Greatly Exaggerated." "All's Fair at Seafair" by Tim A. Smith, Mechanical Editor. "The Badness of Danning" by Fred Hopkins and John Black. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh, Buddha Berman and Chuck Shepherd. Paul Mavrides interprets Harvey Pekar's "The L.A. Performance Scene." Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden, and artwork by Michael Dougan and Mark Zingarelli. Art direction by Art Chantry.

**Number 9:** Ken Brown's "Dude Descending a Staircase" serves as cover and centerfold. "Silver Bullets and Golden Classics: The Music of the Lone Ranger" by Jim Messina, backed with Fred Hopkins's "Clayton Moore - The Man Behind the Mask." Charles Bukowski's first appearance, with "only one Cervantes," illustrated by Robert Crumb. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs and Dave Marsh. Roland Sweet replaces Chuck Shepherd as compiler of "Weird News." Frank Stack renders Harvey Pekar's "Adam Pukes on Halloween," plus cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden, and artwork by Michael Dougan. Art direction by Art Chantry.

**Number 10:** Cover by Aline Kominsky-, Sophie and Robert Crumb (formerly unpublished Christmas card). Mitch O'Connell's "Elvis Presley Viva Las Xmas" centerfold. "The Worst Films of Xmas" by Fred Hopkins and John Black, illustrated by Carel Moiseiwitsch. "Just Say Woe" by Theater Writer Linda Whitney, and columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh and Roland Sweet. Book review by Harvey Pekar, accompanied by his "Somewhere in Pennsylvania," rendered by Joe Zabel and Gary Dunn. Charles Bukowski's "terminology," illustrated by Michael Dougan. Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden. Artwork by Drew Friedman and Danny Mittendorf. Art direction by Art Chantry.

**Number 11:** Cover and centerfold by Carel Moiseiwitsch, illustrating Robert Hennelly's Exxon expose "The Big Spill." "Twisted Valentines" by Fred Hopkins and John Black. "the place" by Charles Bukowski. Poet Jack Thibeau makes his first appearance with "Hollywood." Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Linda Whitney, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh and Roland Sweet. Book review by Harvey Pekar. Cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden. Artwork by Michael Dougan and Brian Williamson. Art direction by Art Chantry.

**Number 12:** Cover illustration of William S. Burroughs by Robert Crumb. "Book of Shadows" by William S. Burroughs, illustrated by S. Clay Wilson, "recognized" by Charles Bukowski, illustrated by Holly Tuttle. "The City of Broken Glass" by Formerly Rocky Goldberg. "L.A." by Jack Thibeau. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh, Linda Whitney, Fred Hopkins and Roland Sweet, and a book review by Harvey Pekar. "Close Call" by Dennis P. Eichhorn and Mark Zingarelli and "More Guys Than Gals Are Forced Into Sex" by Carel Moiseiwitsch, plus cartoon strips by Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden. Artwork by Michael Dougan and T.S. Sullivan. Art direction by Art Chantry.



**Number 13:** Cover illustration of Charles Bukowski by Robert Crumb. "between races" by Charles Bukowski, with illustration by same. Centerfold by Michael Dougan, illustrating Robert Ferrigno's "The Horse Latitudes." "Here Are The Instructions" by Formerly Rocky Goldberg. "Getting the Message Out!" by Harvey Pekar. "poem" by Jack Thibeau. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh and Roland Sweet. Cartoon strips by Carel Moiseiwitsch, Lynda Barry, J.R. Williams and Mark Newgarden. Artwork by Mary Fleener and Sean Hurley. Art direction by Art Chantry, winner of a prestigious Merit Award from the Society of Publishing Design (SPD) for the cover design.

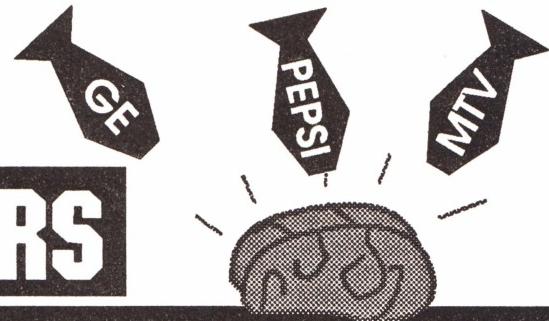
**Number 14:** "SEXTRAL!" issue. Cover by S. Clay Wilson, featuring the Checkered Demon. "Robert Crumb Interview" by *Screw Magazine*'s Al Goldstein, illustrated by Joe Matt III. "Turtle Squirts" by Charles Kraft, illustrated by Jim Woodring. "kiss those days goodbye" by Charles Bukowski. "The Dishwashing Man" by Formerly Rocky Goldberg, illustrated by Holly Tuttle. "The Most Psychotronic Adult Videos of All Time" by Fred Hopkins and John Black. Book review by Harvey Pekar, and columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs, Dave Marsh and Roland Sweet. "poem" by Jack Thibeau. "The Woman Who Tried To Eat Me Alive!!!" by J.R. Williams is a featured cartoon strip. So are S. Clay Wilson's "The Checkered Demon In Hell! Part I" and Mark Newgarden's "So Help Me!" Lynda Barry's contributes her strip. Artwork by Basil Wolverton and Sean Hurley. Art direction by Art Chantry.

**Number 15:** Cover illustration of Jack Kerouac by Robert Crumb. Drew Friedman's Quayle family drawing illustrates Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon's "Dan Quayle, a Pot Dealer and the Information Police." "happy birthday" by Charles Bukowski, illustrated by Michael Dougan. "Billy Bragg: An Appreciation" by Harvey Pekar. Columns by Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, Joe Bob Briggs and Dave Marsh. Artwork by Michael Dougan and Sean Hurley. Art direction by Art Chantry, winner of another SPD Merit Award for the cover design, which also appears in Print Magazine's 1991 Regional Design Annual.

Whew! That's quite a list! There's a little Elvis in every issue, and a little  $\Delta$ , too. To order, just list the issues you want, enclose \$7 per issue or \$90 for all 15 (prices include postage and handling, and are good through June 30, 1992; after that, they're going up. Make checks and money orders payable to NW EXTRA), and send to:

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# WORLD ENTERTAINMENT WARS



## INTELLIGENCE REPORT: HOW TO SEE THROUGH ADVERTISING

(Author's preface: this article is part of a series of pieces reflecting the emerging fragments of a cultural revolution in momentum; other essays include "Occulture," "Breaking Cultural Trance" and "The New Virtual Economy." The term "World Entertainment Wars" was lifted from the mind of my good friend Rob Brezsny and his shock 'n' roll group of the same name; find their CD in your local music market and dance to the real news.)

One of the many lesser known facts about Timothy Leary is his invention of a whole-brain model for intelligence (*INFO-Psychology*; Falcon Press) which has since spawned two additional versions; one by myself (*Angel Tech*; Falcon) and one by Robert Anton Wilson (*Prometheus Rising*; Falcon). Dr. Leary's "Eight-Circuit Brain" theory suggests that "intelligence" is fundamentally plural by definition; an interaction of intelligences, or brains, begets more intelligence. Eight interactive functions of intelligence are defined by Leary and, in the creative process of making them my own, redefined as: physical, emotional, conceptual, social, sensory, psychic, imaginative, and spiritual intelligences. (Readers of *Angel Tech* may notice a change from "mythic" intelligence to the more psychological "imaginative" intelligence.)

This 8-Circuit model suggests that

within each center, or function, there exists three phases necessary to each center's operation; these mirror the trinary activity of the most basic unit of biological intelligence, the neuron, in its capacity to absorb, integrate and transmit information and/or energy. According to my understanding of this model, physical intelligence is increased to the degree one absorbs (receives), integrates (organizes) and transmits (expresses) physical experience. Apply this trinary function to each of the eight levels and you'll get an idea of the extraordinary implications: the realization of intelligence is entirely up to how each neural (not nervous) system processes *its own experience*. To the extent experience is not absorbed, not integrated, not transmitted - *In one's own way* - is the measure of one's ignorance and idiocy in whatever center lacks our presence. We are all greater idiots than we realize; getting past the vanity to admit it, is preliminary to the work of a World Entertainment Warrior. Since this 8-circuit Brain model will be used to address intelligence issues, readers are encouraged to memorize

the first four circuits. To further your research, browse through all three of the previously mentioned books at your local "marginal" bookstore to see which most suits the style of your own central neural system.

The current World Entertainment War is a form of information warfare, existing at the level of mind and perpetrated by a massive infiltration of gorgeous images and catchy buzzwords now upstaging millions of imaginations; images and fantasies enchanting enough to captivate the fancies of those minds who have stopped dreaming their own dreams. Remember, in the Information Age, real wars are no longer fought over mere physical territory but the internal landscapes of the psyche itself; whosoever governs the metaphor, governs the mind. Those who are not learning new ways of learning and those who are not thinking for themselves are already war casualties, often without knowing it.

Those imaginations corroded by Television, Media Debauch, and Advertising Bulimia are suffering the

### ALERT: Imagination Death Precedes Loss of Soul



ANTERO ALLI

silent agonies of a slow death. If these words sound melodramatic and even paranoid, look again. The actual situation they refer to is far more dramatic and terrifying than most people care to imagine. Why? Our minds have been so supersaturated with slick *simulations* of reality, that for some of us, it is growing increasingly difficult to care about the difference ... not just between "reality" and "fantasy" but between one's own fantasies and those mass-produced by corporate imagination killers. Imagination death is a condition preliminary to the death of soul; dampen a person's power for envisioning their own lives, their futures, and you wash away an internal psychic environment that is house and home to a living soul. (Note: I've no time to prove or disprove soul's existence; I trust it's quandary to be sufficient enough to test and define the reader's own sensibilities and conclusions.)

There is a way to apply the 8-Circuit Brain model, in particular the first four centers, as a reference grid for deciphering advertising strategies and eventually, for seeing through them altogether. The first four circuits - physical, emotional, conceptual and social - revolve around four inter-related levels of individual survival. Physical survival is not enough to nurture the life of a soul; there must be an emotional, conceptual and social life, as well. To the extent one is not receiving, assimilating and communicating human experience in any combination of these four, is the extent one continues "spinning wheels in survival mode." Those centers hobbling along on one out of three pistons tend to be more vulnerable to

external commands.. Nobody knows this better than the media wizards working for corporate advertising executives, who play on the consumer's real and imagined deficiencies to sell their products.

#### THE WAY OF HOW

Intelligence, thanks to Quantum Physics, is no longer a *what* but a *how*. Real intelligence thrives on process, not content. Any mind can fill itself with dead data and still remain fundamentally ignorant; many still do. The processes producing whatever contents fill a mind actually govern and regulate that content. *What* something is, identifies it. *How* something happens, shows its essence. Did you ever notice how the way someone says something means more than the content of the words themselves? The way of how. The way of how is utilized to a great effect by the enemy - the Corporate

Advertising Imagination Killers - to change the contents of the consumer mind without asking their permission. Shame. Shame. Shame.

Promotional tactics act on the low-esteem of the native viewer, those minds which have not begun thinking for themselves and governing their own lives. The most sophisticated frontline advertising strategies involve covert methods to trick consumers into believing their lives are,

in ways both obvious and mysterious, deficient without the promoted product; only through purchasing the commodity will the consumer's life be "whole" or "better" again. The successful advertiser exposes a need and then, makes a promise to meet it for a price. There is nothing inherently wrong about

this; it makes good business sense. But when the images and the words that are used to sell a product fail to represent the product itself, we have false advertising and worse: subliminal manipulation of values. An example is when an automobile manufacturer uses the image of an attractive woman to sell a car, they are appealing to the unmet sexual needs of the male viewer (not to mention debasing the "image of women" as an object to sell cars with).

By superimposing the grid of the first four circuits over this general "deficiency" principle, very specific information jumps out at us. Each level of survival, from physical through social, is genetically motivated by specific rewards assuring satisfaction of specific needs: 1) Security 2) Status 3) Knowledge and 4) Sex. Everybody defines and meets their needs for security, status, knowledge and sex in different ways; the content of these needs are universal, the way of how they're met is personal. When needs aren't met, we are frustrated. This basic knowledge also forms the backbone of a successful advertising ploy: *promise them anything but sell the product*. By associating any product with the promise of more security or more status or more knowledge or more sex, the consumer's own unmet needs are touched and they're "hooked."

#### IMAGINATION BOOT CAMP TRAINING

Advertising is the business of promises, fantasies and dreams; truth has never sold that well. Even the new infotainment shows on television (*Current Affair, Cops, Funniest Videos*, etc.) are slick attacks on the consumer need for knowledge they're not getting in their actual lives. As World Entertainment Warriors, a kind of Boot Camp Training for the imagination is imperative, not just for personal autonomy, but for encouraging the autonomy of others. The 8-circuit grid is a good starting point, although any method which challenges the process of self-reclai-

Promise  
them  
anything,  
but sell  
the  
product

mation - physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially - can prove effective as long as each mind is mapping out their own experience. The bottomline to boot camp training is learning how to be a survivor. In Boot Camp Imagination training, you expose your needs to yourself and then find your most creative ways of meeting them. This kind of offense is the best defense to commercial advertising, which as mentioned before, will promise you whatever you're not giving yourself.

The World Entertainment Wars are being fought over the *Way of How* which is, for the better part, largely unclaimed in most people. The public education systems are, in part, to blame for this ruthless atrocity. Remember: in school, young impressionable minds are taught to value knowns over unknowns, content over process, as a measure of not only intelligence but self worth. Anyone remember the feeling of receiving your first "F" on a report card? The highest grades and the greatest approval goes to those minds willing and able to retain the densest volume of known facts; dead data depositories. The imagination becomes ill when the mind stops relating with unknowns; it bends over and dies when a mind turns away from the abyss.

By redefining "security" and "status" and "intelligence" and "sexuality" according to what is most truthful to oneself, an extraordinary thing occurs: one begins to actually exist. And only that which really exists is subject to real change, real life. By defining ones terms, one stands a chance of living by them and cultivating the ground for the

## Define yourself or be defined

birth of a real being. Until then, we are non-entities at best ... wanna-bees out for our next celebrity fix.

Understandably, it takes a certain stance to see this. It is this very lack of stance which forces consumers to suffer as victims of the World Entertainment Wars, no matter how smart we think we are. Are we intelligent enough to confess ignorance, you know: the specific idiocy expressing our particular area of vacancy?

World Entertainment Warriors know it is far too late to avoid self-definition; "define yourself or be defined." Yet, World Entertainment Warriors also fight on the frontlines under camouflage of unexplainable poetry, seductive music and iconoclastic theatre; they evoke where their opponents explain and then, get away with murderous humor. World Entertainment Warriors hit the roads, rearranging highway billboards to expose dangerous truths while circulating posters of political candidates carrying "Dial-A-Prayer" phone numbers. Most of all, World Entertainment Warriors use their wildest imaginations as combat weapons, as power tools and as mojo healing totems for inspiring people to death. If religion is the opiate of the masses then the death of religion is the birth of poetry. •

**ANTERO ALLI** is a poet, media-maker and author of *ANGEL TECH* and other rebellious manifestoes, as well as the editor of *TALKING RAVEN*. For his free katalog of books, tapes and services, please write him directly at PO BOX 45758 Seattle WA 98145 or leave a message at (206)781-5691.

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# n e u r o t i c a



## Mister Clifford's Neighborhood

"I had a printout of this hacker getting names from the CIA's computer. I don't have any truck with the CIA. They're not my friends. I live in Berkeley, for crying out loud. Berkeley is as far left in the country as you're gonna get. On the other hand, I have an ethical duty to my neighbor [who] happens to be the CIA" - Cliff Stoll

*justifying his affiliation with the CIA (from an interview in January 1992 issue of Compute)*

"I said to them, there's another one that the Nitty Ditty Nitty Gritty Great Bird and it says if you want to see a rainbow you've got to stand a little rain."

"If a frog had wings, he wouldn't hit his tail on the ground. Too hypothetical."

- George Bush, U.S. President and Absurdist Poet, 1992.

news and notes from the makers of hurt-you-all reality

A Colorado woman recently reported seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary in the sky above the Mother Cabrini Shrine west of Denver, prompting hundreds of people to stare at the sun in hopes that they too would be blessed by a vision. Instead, five people, including a 29-year-old flight attendant, suffered eye damage. (contributed by Eric Herbert)

"I wonder where the United States is headed. My Concern is that the real victim of the war on drugs might be the constitutional rights of the American People." - Denver Federal Judge Richard Matsch

## Kiss Your Smart Drugs Goodbye

Smart drug users have been dutifully sending their checks to Interlab and Inhome for piracetam and vasopressin, only to wait for months in agony while their brains atrophy. It turns out that the FDA has stepped in and is detaining shipments to the USA. The following was lifted directly from the FDA BBS (1-800/222-0185, 2400 baud, 7-1E): The Food and Drug Administration announced today [January 30, 1992] it has issued an import alert against unapproved mail-order drugs promoted

by six overseas companies. The import alert instructs FDA field offices to automatically detain all imported unapproved prescription products manufactured by six overseas companies which have promoted their products in this country. The companies cited are Interpharm, Inc., of Nassau, Bahamas; Northam Medication Service International Pharmacy of Nassau, Bahamas; Inhome Services of Delemont, Switzerland; International Products of Hannover, Germany; Azteca Trio International, S.A. de C.V., of Zona Rio Tijuana, Mexico; and Interlab of London, England.



# Nina Graboi

by Michael S. Kelly

**Nina Graboi** is a woman whose spiritual and physical journeys, as recounted in her new book, **One Foot In the Future**, serve the serious seeker of transcendence, as well as the casual observer, with a useful roadmap to the major cultural phenomena of this century. She uses words and images to create a brilliant tapestry of the past 70 years, as seen through the eyes of one with a lust for life.

She begins the book with a strikingly personal account of her birth into this world and proceeds to lead us on an action-packed odyssey across the world. Her adventures include: the Nazi invasion of her native Austria, her internment in a prison camp, escape to America, her life as a Long Island matron, stages as a producer of star-studded plays in New York, an actress, a studious inward-seeker, the director of the Manhattan LSD Center and the Woodstock Transformation Center, a mother-figure to the baby-boomers, a welfare recipient, and lately a writer. Whew! One can only ask, "What next?"

Throughout her many careers, Ms. Graboi has come into contact and befriended people such as Timothy Leary, Alan Watts, Ram Dass, Allen Ginsburg, John Lilly, Jean Houston, Stanley Kripner and Ida Rolph. Her portraits of these people are delightfully personal, colorful, and sensitively drawn.

The following are excerpts from an interview conducted with Graboi on August 2, 1991 in Santa Cruz CA, where the author makes her home -

Michael S. Kelly



**boING-boING:** Your book is an autobiography, but also a cultural landscape. Your personal evolution and the evolution of society mirror each other. Today in the 90s, the dominant thinkers still follow the French school of thought like Diderot, Foucault, the Dadaists, the Existentialists. What were some of the philosophical influences in your growth?

Nina: Existentialism was an important element in my personal growth. My reading in the area of philosophy began with the aim of finding meaning -- something that would show me that there is a reality beyond our physical senses. The existentialists raised important questions, but the answers they came up with were, "It's all nothing; it's all absurd, meaningless. Anybody who looks for meaning is a fool." Well, I played with that for a while, but I couldn't settle for a meaningless world. Hinduism and Buddhism showed me that there is both

meaning and no-meaning, and that we have to get comfortable with this paradox. The Hindus say life is an illusion - maya - and at the same time that human life is infinitely precious and that even the gods must take human form before they can go on.

*The predominant academic philosophies seem to be our new religions. A lot of people accept them because they're in vogue. They accept their conclusions as their own without looking at other ideas. Do you see the lack of meaning in existentialism as a reflection of our society today?*

Many of our young people have a hopeless outlook on life. They are overwhelmed by the confusion of these rapidly changing times and by the lack of certainties the outmoded religions promised. The old religions have lost their true grip and left many people without anything to believe in. It's not just existentialism they embrace. The

field is wide open to anybody who says, "I know where it's at! I know the answers." Anybody who claims to know the answers can be a guru today, and any belief system that promises certainties can gather believers. Apparently the hardest thing for many people to learn is to think for themselves.

*Definitely. I wonder what's happened to rugged American individualism!*

Well, the way I understand it, the rugged American individualist had no concern for others. His achievements were mostly to enhance his power and worldly success. His kind of individualism was different from the drive to individuation that is presently pushing us forth. The new individual will be conscious of the ephemeral quality of life and of the interrelatedness of all beings. S/He will live in a world without wars, jealousy, boredom, disease, hunger ... in short, the Garden

of Eden (laughs). It could be, you know, if we all believed it ...

*Doesn't sound much like America! As a native of Vienna, you were raised in the birthplace of Freudianism, which I think had a dominant influence on this whole philosophical and spiritual mishmash we're in now.*

Well, I know I'm not popular when I say that I won't pretend to be proud to have been born in the same city as Sigi Freud. He was a fine writer and a profound scholar of mythology, but I don't think that he has helped us much in our search for mental health. I think he set us back some 50 years in our evolution. His ideas came from observing patients who came to him for help from their mental disorders, and by generalizing his observations, he made us fear the subconscious as the cave where demons dwelled. Until late in life, he refused to recognize any paranormal events or powers. I think he created some of the neuroses that plague people today, and he dismissed the

thoughts, and they were trapped like flies in honey in what I call the self-concentration camp. It's like *No Exit*, the existentialist play by Paul Sartre.

*Do you think Freud's ideas played any part in the rise of fascism in Germany?*

(Long pause) I don't think so. Everything is interconnected, of course, but I really don't see that - unless he made people so self-obsessed that they didn't see what was happening? I don't know.

*How do you feel about modern technology and the information age?*

A friend of mine just came back from Arizona where he visited some Native American settlements. He was full of praise for their lifestyle and looked disdainfully at the street where we stood. "Pavements!" he said. "Why do we cover Mother Nature up with concrete? And all those cars!" Wonder if he included the two he owns. We can learn a lot from the Native American way of life, especially their respect for nature. But I personally like vacuum cleaners. I'm quite content to live in a world where technology exists. That it can be and has been used for evil ends is unquestionable. But I don't believe that technology was a mistake of evolution. I once had a vision on LSD where I was shown the Book of History. An invisible hand was slowly turning the pages, when suddenly a joker popped up from behind the book. "Hah hah!" he laughed mirthlessly. "Took a wrong turn there, didn't you?" The page showed the Gutenberg Bible and the discovery of the printing press. Did we take a wrong turn when reading and writing became available to everyone? I don't know. It's hard to say what would have happened if we had not taken up technology. I do think it has taken on absurd dimensions. In many ways, it demeans the lives it is supposed to better. The computer diminishes personal contact between people ...

*But it also improves communication.*

Well, I have some reservations about that. They call the age we live in the

Information Age. I don't really care for the glut of information that inundates our brains. It's just a lot more stuff. The aim of the spiritual path is to quiet the mind, not to clutter it up.

*This is a good time in history to talk about drugs. We're going through a war on drugs. There's a lot of disinformation and hysteria being spread by members of the government, the media, and the so-called aristocratic elite. At the same time, we seem to be going through a renaissance of the spirit of the 60s. Do you think it's just a fad, or does the renewed interest in psychedelics go deeper?*

I've been fooled before, at the beginning of the 80s, when I thought the idealism of the 60s was coming back. Instead, greed and self-interest dominated the scene. But the 90s are the 60s upside down, so maybe ... I don't know. There will be a lot more shit coming down in the 90s, but I believe that the quantum leap in consciousness that occurred in the 60s will bear fruit in the coming years. A new human race has been born. The old one thrashes about in its death agony and tries to incarcerate those who are discovering the new frontier of their brains. The Reagans and the Bushes who want to carry on in the old ways are like dinosaurs. Their ideas of government, of values, of religion are suited to a former age but are now outmoded and askew. I do see more of the 60s idealism popping up. For a while it went underground, and now it's coming back. I have a suspicion that if you scratch a yuppie who was once a hippie, the hippie will come out again. Once you had these ideas and ideals, nothing else will really do. The drugs are bound to play a role once more as catalysts. I don't like the word *drugs* at all by the way. It's a complete misnomer when it refers to psychedelics, which have nothing to do with drugs that make you lethargic, dull, sleepy. The psychedelics wake you up. They wake you up in such startling ways that they can give you very disorienting experiences. That's why I believe that at this juncture it is vitally

**A new human race has been born. The old one thrashes about in its death agony and tries to incarcerate those who are discovering the new frontier of their brains.**

reports of women about incest and sexual abuse as neurotic fantasies. Years before his ideas were accepted in Europe, America fell in love with them, and the age of self-analysis was born. Soon, the many people who accepted his ideas created a morphogenetic field, and everybody obediently became neurotic. People were fascinated with their moods, their emotions, their

important to educate the young to both the dangers and the rewards of the psychedelic experience. They should learn to use these powerful substances wisely and respectfully, or the mistakes of the 60s will be repeated.

**What would you tell a young person who was contemplating some form of mind expansion with psychedelics?**

There are different ways to use psychedelics. They can be used as a therapeutic tool, to go deeper into oneself; this is best done in the presence of a therapist. They can also be used as an aid to creativity and to problem solving. But their noblest and most ancient use is as a bridge to the ineffable - the Higher Self, as I call it. The most wasteful use to which they can be put is to take them simply for kicks. It's important to be prepared for what can happen on a trip. Many people are not ready for psychedelics. People who are already pretty spaced out need to get grounded. Others with rigid belief systems may find themselves shaken to the core by the collapse of their valued beliefs. Then there are those with weak egos. I define the body as a space suit and the ego as the survival kit which contains the instructions that ensure the body's survival on this planet. Names, addresses, marital status, food habits, skills, memories - all are stored in the survival kit. The immature ego is one that either has not yet developed its survival skills, or gets inflated and abrogates functions to itself that have no real value for survival. It grabs an overabundant supply of money, sex, power, public recognition, in the mistaken idea that it needs these to survive. When these commodities are no longer available, the ego goes through a painful process of deflation. Before we approach psychedelics we should understand that we are not what we think we are - we are more. We are more than our bodies. *OOB* (Out Of Body) experiences are likely to occur, and the unprepared person can have a profound panic reaction. But at their best, the psychedelics can teach us that we are spirit.

**What about smart drugs and smart nutrients? You think they are more geared to having fun and are safer?**

Nina: I think they have the function of cleansing the neurons in the brain. Like brushing your teeth or something. They may help sort out some of the constant information babble that assaults us, I don't know. But I wouldn't put them in the same category as psychedelics.

**They seem more like fun tools. They help you learn and retain what you learn. Psychedelics would be more of a practical tool.**

Aha, you're turning the whole thing around! Society sees the psychedelics as fun tools, and everything that has to do with learning as very serious indeed. You're saying that learning is fun, and psychedelics are serious practical business. They deliver, and they can change you or smash you. Right! Of course! I heartily agree!

**Intelligence can be fun, psychedelics can be fun too; it's all how you experience it. The difference is that the balancing point with psychedelics is more critical. How about virtual reality?**

I can't really compare it with psychedelics either. The key to the psychedelic experience is surrender. With virtual reality the rational mind remains in control.

**Virtual reality is more like practical magic. How about our so-called "New World Order?" Do you see anything in it or is it just the latest buzzword?**

I don't label myself anything - not Viennese, or American, or Jewish, or writer -- so the global society appeals to me ... though I'd hate to see all the different nations become a planetary mush!

**A generic culture.**

Right. There must be geographical and cultural distinctions. But we're on the verge of such enormous changes that to project anything into the future seems silly. I recently read a book about immortality written in '72. The author

states with great certainty that immortality will be available by the '80s. Reading his quasi-scientific prophecies today makes me laugh. In the '60s, we saw that neither communism nor communes, with some rare exceptions, work. Ideally, they should lead to a better life for all, but in practice they can't survive because humanity isn't ready for them, I'm afraid.

**I define the body as a space suit and the ego as the survival kit which contains the instructions that ensure the body's survival on this planet.**

*I see the 60's as a large experiment in being, or different modes of being. I was born in the '60s, grew up in the '70s, and saw it falling apart in the '80s. Was consumerism and the yuppies a setback or a necessary evolutionary step?*

A backlash had to come. The world before the '60s was a different world. But the backlash came - Nixon, Reagan, Bush. At the same time, the baby boomers were growing up and had to direct their energies to earn money for their families. Combined with the backlash, this turned some hippies into yuppies.

**Who are the direct antithesis of hippies.**

True. But I think the hippie is still there, just waiting to come out again. Oh, not in tie-dye shirts ... though that would be nice - we've become mighty dull again since the '60s! The hippies were too ethereal, they had to learn to live in the world. So now they're in their 40s, and I think they'll step forward again once

they've reached their worldly goals. In the meantime, their numbers have increased geometrically.

***The New Age? Or as Penn & Teller call it, the Newage (pronounced like sewage)?***

It saddens me to see how much of its luster these words have lost since we first began to use them! I'm appalled by the easy acceptance of some of the New Age nonsense that has come to replace the old. But the truth is that we have entered, or are going to enter a new age. Much positive new energy is infusing the expansion of consciousness, and that

gives me much hope for the future. •

*Michael S. Kelly is a pen name for an alien ethnomethodologist who is here to study the belief systems of human primate cultures.*

**One Foot in the Future  
A Woman's Spiritual Journey**

By Nina Graboi

357 pp

\$18.95 + \$3.00 p&h

Aerial Press

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**IT WAS ONCE SAID** in a more mystically-inclined time, "God is an intelligible sphere whose circumference is nowhere and whose center is everywhere." The newly-tilted Supreme Court in its deep cynical wisdom has declared God is a Republican with a righteous wrath for women, artists, gays, altered-staters, Native Americans, the counter culture and minorities in general. We must attain to the ultimate state of

pretending that their Eucharist has magical properties, perhaps this rite should be abolished. Fear not, Justice Scalia clearly states in his enlightened opinion that this ruling will most likely be used against "those religious practices that are not widely engaged in." Reassuring, isn't it?

When examining the roots of the Western mystic tradition, the

What did these mysterious rites entail? Since all initiates were sworn to secrecy, it has been a daunting task to answer this question. However in 1978 R. Gordon Wasson, Carl Ruck and Albert Hoffman released a groundbreaking book detailing their extensive research entitled *The Road to Eleusis: Unveiling the Secret of the Mysteries*.

The Eleusinian Mysteries were a profound rite of passage facilitating a deep personal experience of death and resurrection. The initiate came to know, in the most personally powerful way, that there is no death, just ceaseless transformation. No dogma, no sheeplike belief was required, you knew in your bones. How was this accomplished so efficiently and for so long? The Eleusinian rites were conducted in a subterranean temple utilizing shamanic technology and psychodrama based upon the myth of Persephone's abduction by Hades and her metamorphosis. Upon analyzing artifacts found in this destroyed temple complex, an exquisitely beautiful ceremonial chalice, the kernos, was discovered. The interior of this vessel was scraped and spectrographically analyzed. What do you think was discovered? Molecules of ergot-based LSD. Eureka! Our spiritual and cultural ancestors are firmly in the Native American Church camp.

We have been sucked down a 2,000 year tube of spiritual devolution in the West, culminating in the Reagan/Bush Supreme Court and fundamentalist Christianity. Good God! How can this possibly be? As we approach the second millennium, the Eleusinian Mystery, the ecstatic transformation rite, has been reduced to Wonder bread and Welch's grape juice. Great Goddess help us! •

*David Joseph is an astrological counsellor, a deep tissue psychotherapist, and guerilla journalist living in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.*

mindless, heartless conformity.

In April 1990, these black-robed puritans in a 6 to 3 decision, decreed the Native American Church can be legally prosecuted for practicing their religion. Peyote, a psychoactive cactus, has been reverentially used as a sacrament by Native American peoples for centuries - long before the European scourge touched these shores. The arrogance is staggering! The First Amendment continues to receive corrective surgery from the hands of these fascist ideologues. Since Christians are so fond of

Eleusinian Mysteries of ancient Greece tower in significance. These mystical rites were practiced in an unbroken fashion for nearly 2,300 years, until Christian fanatics destroyed them along with the library of Alexandria, effectively plunging the Western world into the dark ages. This mystery tradition was so profound and transformative, that virtually every great philosopher or teacher of the ancient world spoke of it with reverence and awe. Included among the initiates were giants such as Socrates, Plato and Pythagoras.

# BOOK REVIEW

**BRAINCHILD** David Jay Brown, 1988, \$9.95, Falcon Press, 1209 South Casino Center, Suite 147, Las Vegas NV 89104 (800)545-3266

David Jay Brown is a hyper-positive consciousness researcher living in Southern California, working on "the psychobiological research of neophobia and the effects of electrical brain stimulation," and he's got an endearingly goofy smile. I feel lousy about giving his book a thumbs-down review, but I just gotta.

*Brainchild* is a fictional story full of brain toys, psychedelia, cryonics, nanotech, lucid dreaming, etc. Sounds good, right? Unfortunately, the entire book reads like an adjective-bloated acid-trip recollection, barely stitched together with cardboard-cutout characters whose flat dialogue is an all-too-blatant vehicle for Brown's blueprint of extropia. The characters are never anything but words on paper, and even though they go through some severe ordeals, they remain wooden from start to finish. The psychedelic narratives are nothing more than static lists of colorful buzz-words. They reminded me of the rows of dead butterflies on display in wooden cases in a musty London museum I once visited.

I hope that Brown's writing will improve, because I look forward to reading something much better from his fertile, curious mind. (MLF)

## COMPUTERS AS THEATER

Brenda Laurel, 211 pp, Addison-Wesley, 1991

*Reviewed by Robert Campanell*

Brenda Laurel makes a bold premise: "Think of Computers as a Medium, not as a tool." In *Computers as Theater*, Laurel defines the four reasons for human-computer activity, and then applies them to Aristotle's model for the elements of drama. She uses these elements of dramatic qualitative structure to show how the action is orchestrated. Later, she explains techniques to invoke human response to create satisfying human-computer activities.

The second half of the book is where Laurel lays out her most innovative ideas. She believes interface metaphors, such as the Macintosh trashcan, have limited usefulness, and that the central design goal should focus action. She argues for the invisibility of the computer, not its personification. Computer-based personalities will never be perceived as humans, so instead

designers should concentrate on making such characters responsive and accessible to humans.

*Computers as Theater* is interesting, but somewhat difficult to read. Laurel claims the reader does not need to be familiar with computers, but the book seems to be written for a computer-literate audience. The way in which Laurel flips between the elements of drama and human-computer activity is sometimes confusing. Most people are familiar with the structure of drama. They have some idea of how actors, scriptwriters, and directors perform their job tasks. She should have tried to relate the elements of drama to computers, rather than computers to drama.

Despite some drawbacks, *Computers as Theater* is a breakthrough book because it changes the notion of how we perceive computers. When the personal computer is viewed as a medium rather than a tool, computing becomes communicating. Laurel hopes her book will create new visions for computer users. *Computers as Theater* may transform the computer industry, as more people with backgrounds in the arts access the technology to impose their vision. We may be using computers in radically different ways by the turn of the century. •

be worn as necklaces) made from the wood of the Tree of Life (Lignum Vitae), the heaviest and hardest of woods. The small amount of wood that's used is responsibly harvested and a portion of the profits is donated to forest preservation. Some of the pendulums hold fragrances. Life Designs also sells earrings and other kinds of jewelry.

**MARK V ZIESING BOOKS** (PO Box 76, Shingletown CA 96088) A dangerous catalog. As you flip through the 42-page list of rare & cool SF books, you'll inevitably order more than you can afford. Mark and his wife Cindy are honest, hard working folk who like most of the books they sell (and when they don't, they'll say so). You'll also find selected comix, non-fiction and the very finest in zines (be sure and check out the listings under "B").

**MYSTIC FIRE VIDEO** (PO Box 1092, Cooper Station, NYC NY 10276) Hey! cyberspace, alternative medicines & world cultures videos. They sent me a copy of *BORDERS*, with Robert Anton Wilson, Michio Kaku, Margaret Randall and Brian Freemantle. It uses fact and fiction to explore the meanings of lines and limits that humans perceive and create. It also asks what happens when somebody crosses a border (physical, political, or personal).

Writer Margaret Randall talks about stepping over political borders. Her native country, the USA, didn't let her return from Mexico, because US officials thought her writing smacked of communism.

Theoretical physicist Michio Kaku asks how we might cross the border of dimensionality in order to escape the collapse of the universe. (*If it ever happens*. A recent experiment conducted by a University of Colorado astrophysicist indicates that there isn't enough matter in the universe to reverse its expansion.)

One particularly frightening scene in the video shows some US Customs Agents acting like a couple of Nazi SS officers, grilling a young woman coming back from a vacation in Mexico. The weak pieces in the video are the fiction and the lame computer graphics, but don't let them stop you from seeing *Borders*.

**PLUTONIUM PRESS** (PO Box 61564, Phoenix AZ 85082) Zines, books and tapes of experimental art and writing. It looks like most of them are mutated cultural transmissions.

**PSYCHEDELIC SOLUTION GALLERY** (33 West 8th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011 212/529-2462) Catalog update #24 includes more psychedelic posters of the Doors, Butthole Surfers, Jimi Hendrix, Pushead, and a hundred others. The black and white, postage-stamp sized reproductions of the posters are often too small and gray to figure out what's really going on. Maybe you can lick them and it'll clear things up. •

# CATALOG REVIEW

**BIZZARO** (\$2, PO Box 16160, Rumford RI 02916) Great, strange rubber stamps to delight friends and discombobulate enemies. Send another \$2 for the "risque & raunchy" catalog.

**INNER TECHNOLOGIES** (51 Berry Trail, Fairfax CA 94930) 28 slick pages of light & sound machines, synchronized sound, bioelectric entrainments, CES & TENS units, electromagnetism, lucid dreaming, smart drugs, video drugs, cyberactive software, tapes and books. A CyberConsumer's delight.

**JAA PRESS** (SASE, Prince Street Station, PO Box 96, NYC NY 10012) An amazing collection of hard to find and out-of-print cyberspace books. You can find Rucker's cool sex 'n' drug-laden novels of the early 80s, Shirley's *City Come A-Walkin'*, and Sterling's *Involusion Ocean*. They cost more than their originally listed prices, but they're worth it. If you disagree, I'm sure you can pick up some Asimov for a very reasonable price at your local dreck shop.

**LIFE DESIGNS** (Box 773, Boulder CO 80306 303/442-7627) Life designs sells pendulums (to



'd gotten kind of shaky. I'd won the Idriss-Yanovitch contract. Everyone said I couldn't do it. Had to go to a

bigger firm. But I got it. I had to put in 90 hour weeks for a couple of months. My plants died, and my fish went belly up. My exercise program went to hell, and maybe I hadn't been up on my vitamins, fresh air and fiber. But I put the package together and my firm could run with it. And I needed a rest.

Well, to be honest, my doctor prescribed a rest. I sort of fainted at a board meeting and came to in the hospital. Rapid, weak pulse -- bleary -- difficulty in concentration. All the classic signs of overwork. So my doctor sent me up to Eagle Pass. I could lay around, read old *Reader's Digests*, walk long walks around the lake, eat fresh fruit. No telephone, no teevee, radio, computer, etc.

Eagle Pass is a ski resort in the Sangre de Christo mountains. Nobody comes during the summer -- despite the beautiful lake and the pine- and aspen-covered mountains. There are better lakes and more beautiful mountains for the summer people.

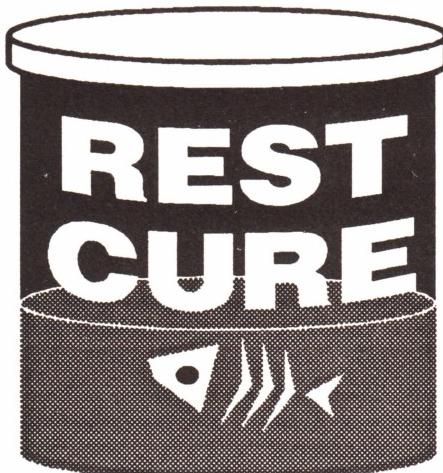
It was my doctor's cabin. I drove up in his Jeep station wagon. His cabin was close to the ski lift. It smelled of wood smoke when I unlocked it. I got my bedding out of a real cedar chest and turned on my electricity at a real switch box. I carried in my groceries. And that was it for the day. I woke up around midnight. I realized that I hadn't primed the pump, so I'd have to relieve myself in the woods.

I watched the chairs of the ski lifts sway against the stars. I heard an owl. I took off my watch and threw it into the lake. I'd live by the calendar for a week. I couldn't remember ever being without a watch. I'd received a watch for my fourteenth birthday and had never been without one since.

Back in the cabin I discovered there was no calendar.

\*\*\*

It was cold next morning. The cabin had an electric stove, but I resolved to use the fireplace. I made a layer of



## DON WEBB

*Reader's Digest* pages and wood chips and I placed logs on top of this. I struck those long "fireplace" matches against the gray stone and held them to the paper. When I had wasted ten matches I finally soaked everything with kerosene and created a fireball. The wood finally caught and the chemical smell was gone by mid-morning.

I had a breakfast of seedless grapes, peaches, and ox heart plums. I was going to try my hand at priming the pump. Doctor Brady had told me that priming required patience. I took a galvanized iron bucket, dipped it in the lake and carried it to the pump (over the toilet in the bathroom). I stuck a yellow plastic funnel into the priming valve. Then all I had to do was hold the funnel steady -- while I poured water into it -- while I gunned the pump's motor by the red switch on the other side of the funnel. Doctor Brady was a man of understatement. I wound up wearing the first two buckets of icy lake water, getting a nasty electric shock from the pump's motor, and losing the funnel behind the pump.

Plan two was to fill up the bathtub with water I'd hauled up from the lake. I could pour buckets of water from the tub into pitchers for drinking or cooking. By the time I'd filled up the bathtub, the fire had made the cabin too hot so I lunched on a stump by the lake.

I came into the cabin for my afternoon nap. Some sediment had settled in the bathtub. I carefully filled up the two glass pitchers from the cabinet over the sink and set them on the dining table.

There was a tiny fish in the tub. I resolved to catch it and throw it back in the lake. I felt bad about my goldfish. I threw my pants over the rocking chair and lay down on the couch.

\*\*\*

Morning sunlight passed through the two pitchers and filled the room with lightwaves. I was dazzled when I first opened my eyes. I thought I was in my condo's pool watching the light patterns of the surface. Why wasn't I drowning? Then I fully woke up -- checked for my watch -- then realized where I was. Sleeping from the afternoon to the next day wasn't usual for me. I laughed. Maybe this rest cure would do me good. I went to get my B vitamin supplement. I played with the water in the pitchers for a while. Shake them, move them, watch the golden green patterns of light. Then it hit me that I didn't necessarily know if it was this day or the day after. I could've slept longer. I took my vitamins, put on my pants, and headed for the Jeep. I was going to drive down to the grocery and bait store and ask what day it was.

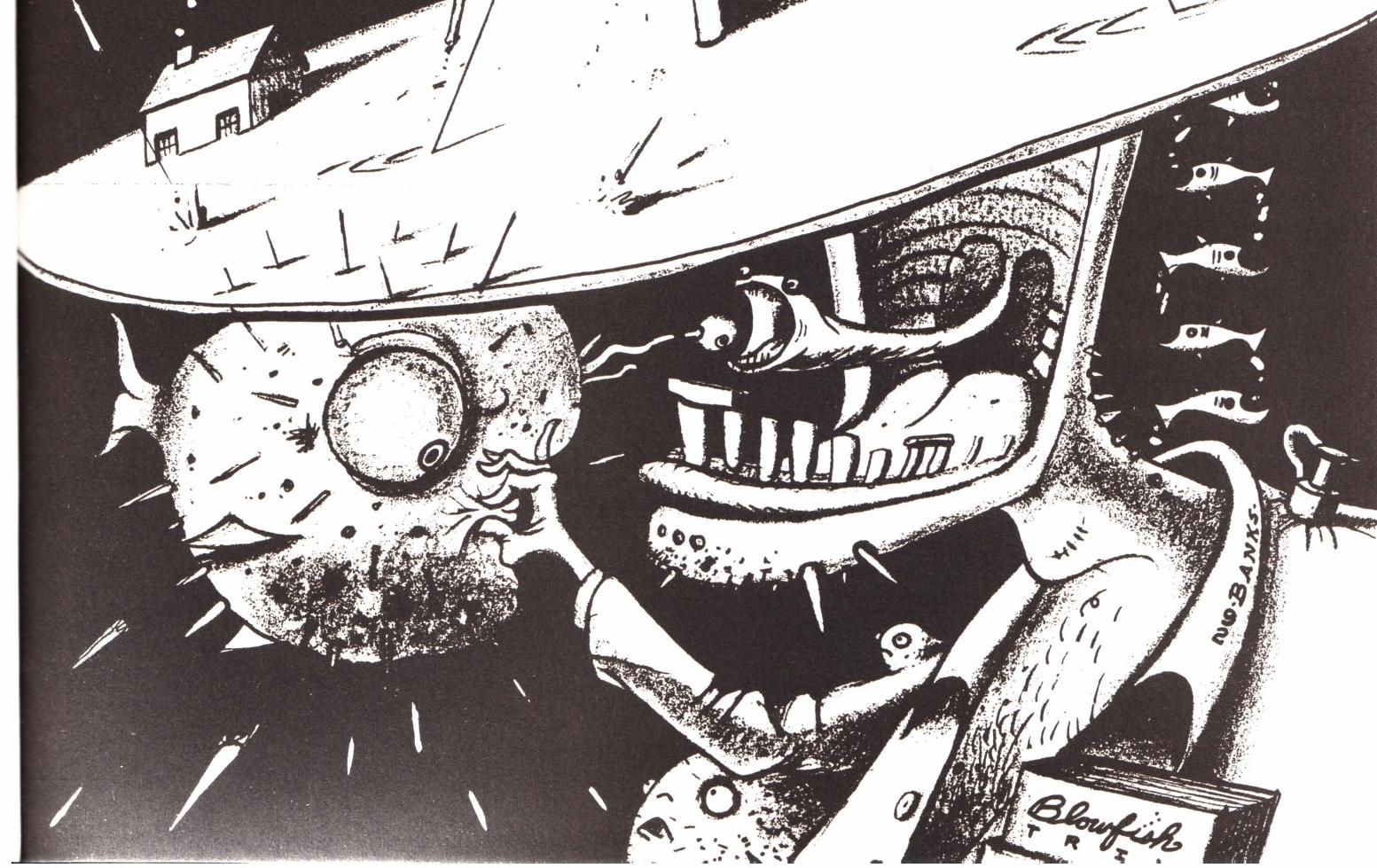
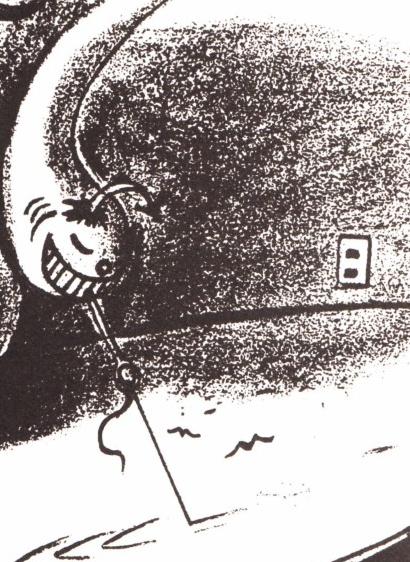
I stopped myself. If I'd slept for a solid 36 hours, I'd have more beard. I was letting my watch-mindedness get out of hand. I went in to draw some water to heat for shaving. I couldn't find the little fish. I bent over the bathtub and looked very carefully. No fish. I might have just seen some sediment shifting. I hadn't really looked closely before.

The water boiled quickly because of the altitude. I was a little scared of the boiling water and decided to forgo shaving. I had a quick breakfast.

I took a walk around the lake. This was my first fun. It seemed I'd been here so long just unpacking and fussing with the pump. The air sang to itself through the aspen leaves and played along the surface of the lake. Twice I heard a fish break water, but it was gone by the time I turned to look for it. Just the widening circles.

All human habitation was clustered -- like my doctor's cabin -- around the ski lift. Seven cabins in all. Each could sleep 20 in the season. All empty. I watched them recede and draw near

RELAX



again as I circled the lake.

Normally we separate the man-made and the natural, but the empty cabins belonged to the same set as the trees and the sky. They were only occupied for a few months a year, during the winter when the lake couldn't watch them.

After my circuit of the lake I tried my hand at priming the pump again. Since the doctor had gone to the expense of sinking a well, perhaps the lake water wasn't potable. It tasted all right, however. I had no luck with the priming. I had to stop before sunset. I wanted to play in the water light again. I moved the couch away from the western window and moved the table to the same spot relative to sunset it was in for sunrise. I wished my doctor could see me. He said I couldn't unwind.

I filled all the clear glasses with water. When the sun hit them -- the cabin was transformed. I would shake the table gently and would mime an underwater ballet in the shimmering waves. I hadn't been so relaxed in weeks. To hell with Idriss-Yanovitch. I would do this every year.

Sunset died and I built a fire. I read all of the "Laughter -- the Best Medicine" columns in the *Reader's Digests*. Tomorrow I would take up "Quotable Quotes." I rocked in the creaky rocker. Once I gave myself a start. Between the fire popping, the creaking rocker and the light reflected from the sixteen glasses I thought someone was in the room with me. I hadn't come here to be spooked so I poured all the glasses down the sink. Tomorrow I'd quit kidding around and do some serious hiking.

\*\*\*

I woke up with a strong sense of being watched. There was no guarantee that Eagle Pass wouldn't have another visitor. Most of the cabins were taken care of by an investment service out of Taos. Maybe the maintenance crew had stopped by. I got dressed and walked around each of the cabins. No one seemed to be at home. Then I checked the Jeep. The driver's door was ajar, but there wasn't any other sign of tampering. I locked its doors.



After I breakfasted, I filled my canteen and went for a walk in the woods. I figured I'd watch to see if anybody came around. I wanted to get this over with. If I had to deal with a tramp, I'd do so now and keep most of my vacation free. I circled around the lake and watched the cabins from the far side. As long as I kept the lake between me and the cabins I didn't feel I was being watched. There was a spot where the aspens went right down to the lake and I could go and refill my canteen. It was a hot day. If anyone had been there I'd've seen them coming to drink. By mid-afternoon I gave up my silly idea. But when I walked back to the cabin, I felt watched again.

I thought I saw something inside my cabin, but it was only the light of my opening the door refracted through the pitchers. Closing the red and white check curtains before I started supper relieved my senses.

I'd have to drive to that grocery store tomorrow. I thought I'd brought more supplies than I had. That is, I thought they would have lasted longer, but the mountain air sure gives you an appetite.

I looked for the little fish in the tub again. I couldn't find him. I'll have to haul up some more fresh water tomorrow so he'll be able to breathe. I made my fire and spent the evening with my *Reader's Digests* again. I moved the pitchers of water off the table so I wouldn't be bothered by tricks of light.

After the fire died down I listened for a long time. If there was someone sneaking around my cabin I would hear him. But all I heard was the lake and the nightbirds.

\*\*\*

I woke up in the rocking chair. The doctor would be surprised to see how relaxed I've become. I'm almost indifferent to time. Today I would take a long walk in the woods. Two creeks fed the lake and I would track them to their source. I could drink straight from the freezing spring as it rushed out of the mountain. I was developing a fine beard. I wouldn't shave it off. It would be quite a surprise to the folks back at the office. I planned to do many fun things today so I'd need to get going. No more lazybones for me. Before breakfast I hauled water up from the lake to fill the tub. I drank plenty of it too. It was thirsty work. Then I had a light breakfast -- supplies were wearing thin. I'd need to go to that grocery store tomorrow. I was too busy today.

I walked all the way around the lake. I don't know why I felt that the waters were so icy before. It was fun to wade although the bottom was a little soft in places. I didn't see any fish, but I was making so much noise I probably scared them away. I waded up one of the creeks. It didn't shine with the sun or reflect the blue sky like the lake. After a quarter mile I decided that this was a waste of time. It wasn't what I was here for. I waded back to the lake drinking its water with my cupped hands. I was amazed that it was so fresh without an outlet.

Tomorrow I will swim. I'll swim naked if I can overcome the fear of being watched.

I definitely saw *someone* near my cabin. While I was wading, some man was sneaking around the cabins. He wasn't doing anything. He just walked from behind my cabin to the Jeep. He tried the door and walked back. I don't think he plans to do me any harm. He could've killed me while I was sleeping. And yet, he doesn't come when I'm around. He must live in the woods. Maybe he hasn't seen anyone for a long time.

I put the shutters on the windows. I had to put a cloth over the mirror because of the way the light played on its surface. The lake was very loud and I didn't want to make rocking noises.

\*\*\*

I woke up very late because the shutters had kept the cabin dark. I had the last of the Oreo cookies for breakfast. I hauled the water from the tub back to the lake because I didn't want the little fish to be harmed. I hoped that I had freed it, but when I refilled the tub I saw movement in its watery depths. The water seemed thick and glassy today, as though I were watching it in slow motion. I've made a breakthrough! My time-senses must be different. Expanded somehow. I watched the slow waves in the bathtub for hours. I could feel myself move with them. I filled all the glasses again. Any water, any shiny surface tension could induce this effect. I would surround myself with water when I returned.

I closed my eyes for several minutes to break from water-time. When I opened them the water was acting normally, but I found I couldn't stare at it for too long. This was a discovery that could change everything! I put all the glasses and the pitchers in the bathroom. There was no light coming through the cracks in the shutters. I was too tired to make a fire and fell asleep on the couch.

\*\*\*

The next day I drove to the grocery. It was an annoying waste of my time, but Edison must've stopped to eat. I bought lots of everything. The old woman in the flannel shirt behind the counter asked me if I was Brian Zedd. I thought about it and realized I was. She told me that someone in Houston had called for me at the store. I told her I was too busy to return the call -- in fact, if they called again, tell them I'd already left. I winked at her and she winked back and I knew I'd bought some time. She asked me if I wanted any bottled water. I told her I had plenty of water. She said I must be staying at Doc Brady's place. I said it was Doc Brady's place now, but I was thinking of moving in. She laughed.

As I drove back to my cabin I realized I should have asked her about the man in the woods.

Everything seemed to be waiting for me when I got back. I knew *he* was out there. He'd be glad to see the amount of

supplies I'd laid in. He wouldn't have to be lonely. You're never lonely if you've got someone to watch.

I would do the good thing and open the shutters. There. Now he could see me. He'd see me doing my experiments. He would know that I was a man of science and that he could trust me. He could come tell me why he lived in the woods.

After putting my supplies in the cabinets, I brought all of the glasses and pitchers out of the bathroom. I even uncovered the mirror.

The mirror might lure him in. I'd noticed that the lake didn't give back a reflection. Maybe he hasn't seen himself in years. He'll see the mirror through the window and then he'll want to come in. I washed it sparkling clean.

I turned on all the electric lights in the cabin and made a big fire. Then I busied myself in the *Reader's Digest* enriching my word power. I was careful not to look up. I didn't want to scare him away. I'd read almost all of the "Word Power" sections when I heard a huge splash in the lake. He was communicating with me -- letting me know he was here.

\*\*\*

The next day I took all my glasses and pitchers down to the lake and emptied them. I wanted to fill the valley with the sound of rushing water. I wanted him to know that I had heard him. After all the glasses had been drained I slowly took off my clothes. I wasn't worried about him seeing me naked. It wasn't that kind of relationship. I wanted him to know I understood about lake-time. He and I were a new breed of men. There might be others who could plunge in with us. But that didn't matter. We would be around forever. Glaciers had carved this lake before homo sapiens were a twinkle in Jehovah's eye.

I swam and swam. Back stroke, crawl, dog paddle, but he didn't come.

The sunlight waned and I had to come inside.

I unlocked the back door of the cabin. I made a big fire.

I saw the little fish swimming again in the depths of the mirror.

\*\*\*

The next morning I knew. He had taken the final step. The ultimate step in mankind's evolution. Everything that had happened were flickers of his mind. He was all around me, but especially in the lake. That's where life had gone wrong. It had never been meant to leave the water. If I could just contact him, he could tell me how to follow him.

The mirror! The mirror was like a window I could carry. I pulled it from the wall and took it down to the lake. I held it under the water. For a long time I could only see my own face, but a second face began to form blue and round. It wasn't human. It never had been. It rose out of the water and I could feel it pass through my nostrils and I into the water.

\*\*\*

I saw him leave today in his Jeep. I do not care. Soon ice will form on the roof of the world. •

## Day Dreamer Portal to Oz!



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# LSD

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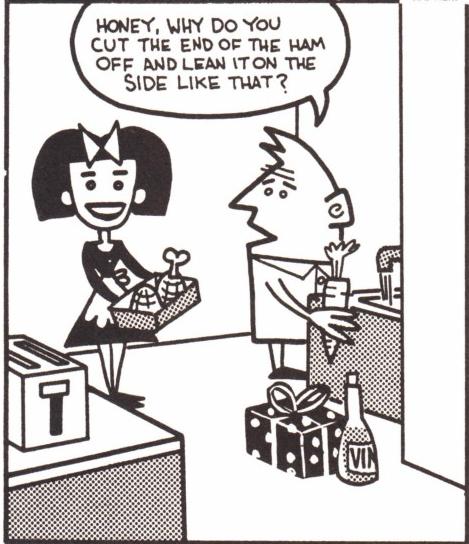
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# VOODOO MEMORY

Story: Gareth  
Art: Mark



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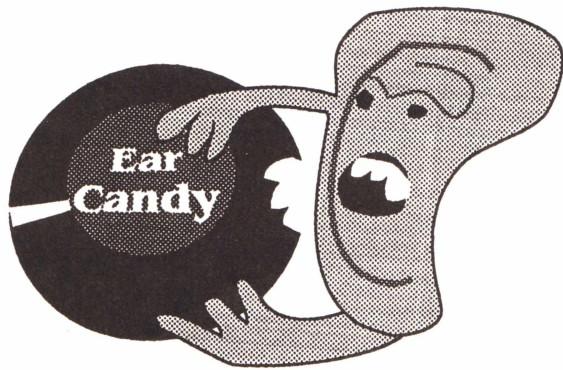
## nter Stage Left -- Mike

Gunderloy and Steven Ellis White, bozos who think driving is a state of mind. Mix well with a far-out brain zine, a smattering of the unknown, Tantra and LSD. This combo (shaken, not stirred) is bound to produce a

bitchin' music review column... Either that or something you might find stuck to the floor of a New York City Taxi.

The point is that you should keep your eyes open for music editors Steve & Mike either in this spot, or if worse comes to worst on floors of better cabs everywhere.

Before getting down to this episode's picks, the irresponsible journalist in each of us wishes to plug some of the hippest of recent releases - stuff we've been toting around in the car for weeks thinking how great it was... I guess we can suppress the guilt of it all just long enough to share the info. Think of this as



a check on where we're coming from, out here on the frontiers of sound. Fortunately for you, these first three Godlike recordings are all on major labels, so hop on down to the record store and pick up copies of **The KLF**'s "The White Room", **The Orb**'s "Adventures Beyond the Ultraworld", and **Primal Scream**'s "Screamadelica" ("We just want to get loaded ... and to have a good time!"). There is also one CD which you absolutely MUST buy from Mammoth Records (Carr Mill 2nd Floor, Carrboro, NC 27510), and that's the debut self-titled release from **Machines of Loving Grace**. There's only 4 songs here, but we can listen to them for, oh, eight or ten hours straight without even doing any drugs. MLG simply have the perfect sublime combination of sampling, heavy beats, killer guitars, electronics and sheep. For further points of reference, Steve is too fond of the blues, while Mike has a disgusting affinity for underproduced overindustrial music.

Now as far as the stuff that's come trundling into

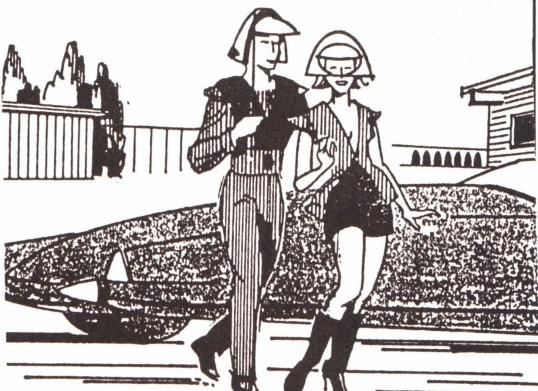
the fabulous *bb* Music HQ for reviewing ... most of it is out on the scrap heap. See, we're not going to waste your time with bad music, unless it's awesomely bad. What we intend to do is present some of the good stuff, as we get around to hearing it...and maybe crap on a few of the bad things too.

The Golden Apple Award goes this round to **Llwybr Llaethog**

(we think that's Welsh for "Little Warthogs", but we're not sure) for "Mewn Dyb (In Dub)" on ROIR records. According to the jacket, it's Industrial Funk meets Acid House, Hip Hop, Rap, Heavy Dub Reggae and African Rhythms, and that's the best description we can think of. Fortunately, the ever-trusty S&M were completely lost on some backroads in another state (*that was Mike's fault - SEW*) (*Steve was driving - MAG*) when this one hit the top of the stack. Nothing else to do but crank it up and get more lost, which we did and it was worth it. For complete info contact ROIR, Suite 411, 611 Broadway, New York City, NY 10012 or buzz them at 212/477-0563. Also from ROIR is the more Caribbean-flavored "Black Cat Dub" from **Gato Negro**. ROIR in general is the best place to go for cool new dub albums, for those who think the engineer is king.

**Sleep Chamber**'s "Sleep or forever hold your piece" is a jamming industrial funk CD, bordering on deathie... The only thing that distinguishes it from death rock is some Led Zeppelin sampling on "A Better Way" for which I hope they don't get sued 'cuz this is great stuff, and only a little morbid. Interested Industrial-Deathies should contact Sleep Chamber at Box 1060, Allston, MA 02134.

**No Man** is still mostly Roger Miller, with the help of some percussionists and

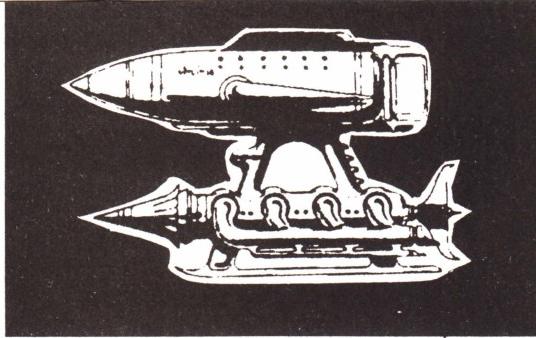


fellow madmen, and their latest release is "How the West Was Won". The Stevemeister isn't too impressed, but then, due to time constraints he hasn't yet had the opportunity to experience "Reach For the Sky" through earphones at an excessive volume. Powerful stuff without the electronic edge that would push it into the future, but still worth exploring from SST, PO Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260.

It's too bad the only allegedly psychoactive recording here is such crud, but that's about all we can say about **Enid Lopez** and the "Deep Delta Brain Hemisphere Harmonic Healing" tape. Or maybe you like Star Trek noises over static (or was it the sound of the ocean?) more than we do. All I can say is that listening to this did nothing to relax me after the effects of a complicated software failure.

And finally, the Valiant Effort Award goes to **Tool** and their album "72826". The music was average, although maybe a little on the low-quality side for sound (*to be fair, the CD may sound better: TOOLSHED Music was too cheap to send a CD, so I ended up listening to the cassette on my less-than-adequate car stereo in a cold garage. - SEW*) (*They probably don't have any CDs - MAG*). Regardless, the band has the best *image* we've seen in a while. **TOOL**'s icon seems to be a rather phallic-looking cross between a wrench and an erection, and "TOOL" is embossed in block letters. Even though the music is less than spectacular, they sent a socially unacceptable T-Shirt (complete with Erection-wrench) which is about as cool as they come. Too bad there's no address or info on the cassette, or I might be able to tell you where to get one.

And now, for those of you who were expecting responsible



journalism in this space, we present the ever-popular Richard Kadrey, who has excellent taste and doesn't seem to have ruined his brain with drugs the way we did. We'll be back next issue with more cool mind-altering music, with input from whichever corners of the globe we manage to drive to between now and then.

## RICHARD KADREY ▼

**Dunkelziffer:** "In The Night" As a member of Can, Damo Suzuki's understated vocals added an interesting texture to the overall sound of the band. His voice was treated like any other instrument in the mix, no more or less important than the bass or organ. Suzuki's new band, Dunkelziffer, is best described as Can-Lite, a jazzier, more freewheeling version of the experimental 70's band, but much less compelling. Suzuki's voice is more prominent here, and its deficiencies more evident. He is a pleasant singer, but not compelling. His band is bright and functional, but uninspired. In fact, the entire album can be described that way: "pleasant, but uninspired." Even the few high points drag. "Watch On My Head," is an amusing reggae workout, while "Oriental Cafe" promises exotica and mystery, but delivers an afternoon browsing at Pier One. For collectors only. (Funfundvierzig 02)

**John Trubee & The Ugly Janitors of America:** "World of Lying Pigs" This cassette release covers a lot of ground. While

mostly a collection of laid-back 70s-style California rock, Trubee & The Ugly Janitors breakup the mix with by throwing in venomous rants and clandestine recordings of prank phone calls. Trubee's voice is fine and strong, but his real strength is a conceptualizer. It's the anti-commercial moments mixed with the rock on "World of Lying Pigs" that show his true face. Nowhere is this more evident than on the last cut, "Blind Man's Penis." On seeing a "We'll set your lyrics to music" company in a magazine, Trubee scribbled down lines of LSD-spew-nonsense, and mailed them off with a check for \$88 (or thereabouts). He got back a disc with his hallucinatory lyrics sung in a moribund drawl to a skeletal country & western tune. A great prank, and a wonderful song. It alone makes this tape a must-have. Cassette available from: Ladd-Frith, P.O. Box 967, Eureka, CA 95502

**Kit Watkins:** "Thought Tones 2" Music as pure sound. Sound as landscape, an environment that encloses you. No melodies here, just *thought tones*, aural oases that allow your imagination to wander where it wants, or demands. If you heard and liked Volume One, you'll like Two. They're complementary releases, similar in idea and method, but different enough to remain distinct works. CD available for \$16.50 from: Cuneiform, P.O. Box 8427, Silver Spring, MD 20907

**La Sonorite Jaune:** "Anastia." A soundtrack for space exploration. Guitars flutter in zero-G. Something metallic strikes hull. Time is an illusion. Are those voices coming from the speakers, or inside your own head? Someone is in the airlock.

This ship is never coming home.

Cassette available from:

Complacency, Box 1452,

Palantine, IL 60078

### Tina Marsh & Creative Opportunity Orchestra:

"Radioactive." Big bands are the whales of modern music - impressive in their size, but slow to react, and ultimately boring to observe. Tina Marsh and the Creative Opportunity Orchestra, however, perform a Dr. Frankenstein on the form, applying electrodes to just the right places, and giving it just enough juice to get the beast on its feet, dancing and spouting poetry. Marsh's vocals are especially captivating, wavering somewhere between Meredith Monk and Patti Smith. Listening to "Radioactive" is like seeing a condor fly and thinking, "I thought

those were extinct. Glad they're not."

Cassette available from:

DAAGNIM, 1127 N. Clinton,

Dallas, TX 75208

### Three Quick Reviews by Mark Frauenfelder

**Sosodada** - (Cassette) A new tape from the New Jersey sample bandit. Sounds like he's bought a bunch of new gadgets. The "I've fallen and I can't get up" woman makes an unwitting guest appearance here, as do advertising pitchmen and other assorted idjits. I played this two-song cassette in my car about 20 times non-stop on a long drive and made me crazy in the most delightful way.

**Pell Mell**: "Bring on the China" / "Smoke" (Remix) (7" White vinyl SST 913) Instrumental songs are neato because you can pretend they're about anything.

"Smoke" has a slow, sitary sound that would make a great theme song for a trashy spy flick. "Bring on the China" is a jangly drone that can be played over the television news while the presidential candidates cry for attention.

**The Sarnos** (six-song 7", Heyday Records, PO Box 411332, San Francisco CA 94141-1332) An acoustic quintet that covers a lot of territory in six songs. "Candy" has the flavor of one of X's slow tunes, with girl-boy harmony. (See if you can find the Robert Anton Wilson reference.) "You May Be Right," the old Billy Joel tune, is given the proper treatment, complete with acousto-R'n'R and wild scat. ven & the Violent Femmes. Bet it's a fun neighborhood. \*

## bOING-O-RAMA!

### Out of a job? Eat your Gnobi T-shirt!

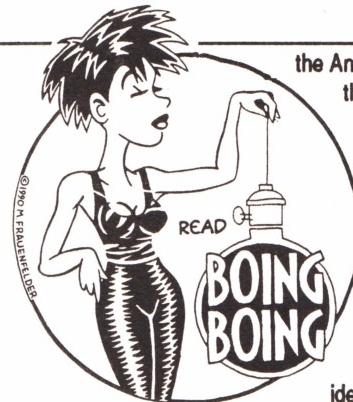
The only good thing we can say about the Andromedans is they're excellent imitators. They've put trillions of Milky Way sentients out of work by copying our products and dumping them on our galaxy. The biggest Andromedan violator of intergalactic trade agreements is *Gnobi Enterprises*, a mega-corporation that holds billions of Andromedan companies in their slimy pseudopods.

The next time you buy a copy of *Gnobi Magazine* or one of Gnobi's t-shirts, remember that by supporting the Andromedans, you're giving away Milky Way currency that could be used at home to revitalize our crippled economy.

Sure, *Gnobi Magazine* costs a little less than *bOING-bOING*, and yes, at first blush, *Gnobi Magazine*'s articles appear to have more bang for the buck. Too many Milky Way denizens have been tricked into buying Gnobi products, and now they're crying because they've been layed-off and they're broke.

But you have money, we know you do. If you don't have it, we know that you have ways to get it. It's not important how you come up with the cash to buy the fantastic products listed below. The important thing is that you buy them and support our galaxy's economy. Everything *bOING-bOING Enterprises* sells is made on planets in the good old Milky Way, and dadgum-it, we're proud of that fact. So be a Milky Way Patriot - buy *bOING-bOING* products!

**T-shirt.** Kata Sutra is a fractal anarchist for the NeoWobblies, a staunch supporter of the Milky Way way. She HATES the Andromedans. "They keep selling everybody high-quality manufactured goods at low prices! The NeoWobblies have been trying to give away NeoWob tech for years. But who wants one of our free 110 baud modems when



the Andromedans are selling faster-than-light Dataplasms for a nickel each?" White, Thick cotton. Cut to fit primates with one head. Large or Xtra-large \$12.

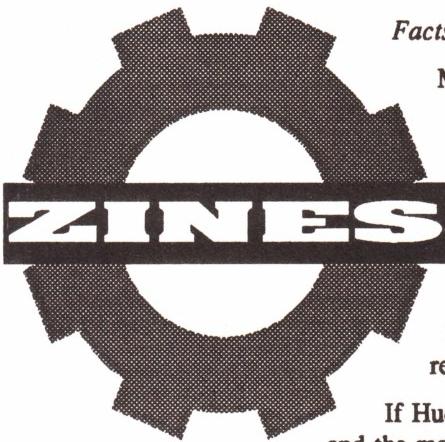
**Back Issues.** Issues 1-4 are sold out. The Andromedans bought 'em all up and now they're reprinting the articles in *Gnobi Magazine*, claiming that they came up with all the neat ideas and jokes. Luckily, we have a few copies of issues 5-7 left. Buy them now before the Andromedans do and further damage the Milky Way's economic infrastructure.

**Issue 5** This issue has lots of Smart Drugs information. Learn about these powerful placebos and how to get some before the FDA makes them officially verboten. Only a few copies remaining (*Gnobi* is buying them all up). A steal at \$15.

**Issue 6** A small box containing some copies of issue #6 was discovered in the *bOING-bOING* offices under a pile of obnoxious in-house advertising copy. It features a cover illustration of Kata Sutra emerging from the sunroof of her brand new *Gnobi Stuzzbuggy*. We're giving these away for \$5 each.

**Issue 7** Look at the pretty cover depicting a softboy playing with a robotic fly. What are his nefarious designs, and will you be one of his unwitting pawns? You won't find out by purchasing a copy, but you will be making us \$10 richer.

And because we want to do our part to steer our galaxy back on track, we'll spring for the shipping and handling! Send your money to *bOING-bOING* 4500 Forman Ave, Suite 2, Toluca Lake, CA 91602.



*Factsheet Five*, the zine of zines, is undergoing some weird changes.

Mike Gunderloy, the founder of this amazing magazine that changed many people's lives, was working 100 hours a week for what amounted to less than a dollar an hour, before selling *Factsheet Five* to Hudson Hayes Luce, who has so far published one issue. While I haven't seen Hudson's *F5*, I've heard that there are a few problems with it. The zines aren't listed alphabetically, they're listed geographically. One reader said that the new *Factsheet Five* seems to be strangely "content free." Lots of people complained about not receiving issues they paid for. From my dealings with Hudson, I think he's honest and that he believed he was capable of running the operation, but didn't realize how big a responsibility he was taking on.

If Hudson tries to continue to produce a Gunderloy-style *F5*, he's going to drive himself and the magazine into the ground. That's why *Factsheet Five* is moving in a new direction. It is going to be published electronically, as a virtual zine. Jerod Pore, the editor of *Poppin' Zits*, and John Lebkowsky (*F5*'s book editor) have volunteered to co-pilot *F5*'s migration to cyberspace. Anyone with access to a modem will be able to download the magazine. Hardcopies will be made available from independent participants, in various formats.

Jerod and John are asking for readers' comments about the development of the electro-*F5*: what it should look like, how it should work, what kind of file-format should be used. Some people are asking for a hypertext format, others want straight text files, others want to have the reviews put into dBase format and let propeller-heads develop their own browsers and sell or give them away.

The paper version of *Factsheet Five* will not curl up and die, though. It will become a "best of" version of the electronic *F5*. Hudson, Jerod, and John welcome your comments and suggestions :*Factsheet Five*, PO Box 8615, Prairie Village, Kansas 66208. (\$20/yr/6 issues by bulk rate, \$30/yr/6 issues by 1st Class mail)

**VAL - Reviewed by Valerie Anne Lionel**  
**MLF - Reviewed by Mark Frauenfelder**

**ACCUSATIONS OF UNNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR #2** (\$1, Brian E. Drake, 207 W. 85th St. #608, New York, NY 10024)  
This edition of Brian's personalzine explores government manipulation of the media during the Gulf War and draws some eye-opening, as well as side-splitting, conclusions. A handful of poetry is thrown in for good measure, along with a short story documenting the trials and tribulations of a self-impregnating hermaphrodite. (4 pages, xeroxed, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**ALT** (Free, California Institute of the Arts, 24700 McBean Parkway, Valencia, CA 91355) The student magazine of CalArts, ALT offers the usual assortment of poetry, short stories and non-fiction. "Marijuana," an enlightening essay on why it's in the best interests of pharmaceutical companies and big business to feed the public disinformation about hemp, is reason enough to pick this one up. (14 pages, off-set, color cover, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**ANTHOLOGY 1991** (Free, Cafe Armageddon, 2008 Oxford, Austin, TX 78704) The medium is the message here, with this artzine having the look, feel and taste of something you'd find on a Soho loft coffee table. The presentation of these poems, short fiction pieces,

drawings and interviews is everything. Stickers, colored hand stamps and insert booklets turn the publication itself into a slick work of art. Published annually by an Austin-based media arts group. Way cool! (26 pages, off-set, color, 11 x 8.5) (VAL)

**BLUE RYDER** (\$2.25 or \$10/6 issues, PO Box 587, Olean, NY 14760) Heard this one referred to somewhere as "the *Utne Reader* of the underground," and damned if I can come up with a more fitting description. Excerpts and reprints from every 'zine you've ever heard of (and even some you haven't) abound. But be sure to take an extra hard look-see at the handful of original contributions, which include some top-notch poetry. (20 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**DISPATCHES FROM A LIVING PLANET** (\$4, a portion of which is donated to Greenpeace, Adrian Hodges, 3 Ashfield Close, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Glos. GL52 4LG) "A collection of green poetry and fiction" that never succumbs to one-track preachy eco-dogma or tearjerking save-the-tortured-baby-animal pleas. Mostly creative admonishments from those who see no future for our future. (40 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, digest size) (VAL)

**FEH! #10** (\$5/3 issues, 2226 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis MN 55405) Body fluids, decay, cold, smelly and slimy stuff make up a big part of *Feh!*, the "journal of odious poetry." I especially liked "Ode to Rubber" by Ian A. Wood, a short poem paying homage to the bouncy substance that so many fun and useful things are made of. *Feh!* delivers a wet Bronx cheer to the mass media-controllers who pretend this inevitable side of DNA-based life doesn't exist. (24 pages, digest, typeset) (MLF)

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT #2** (\$2 or \$8/4 issues, R. Seth Friedman, 25 W. 13th St., Apt. #5-N-N, New York, NY 10011) A tasty new 'zine that somehow segues the biting personal commentary of the editor with just-like-mom-useta-make-'em recipes covering a range of cultures, food groups and difficulty. Seth's a New Yorker, so most of his gastronomic gazette revolves around life the big city. To some, this may be as mind-numbing and annoying as the wait for an uptown Manhattan 'E' train at 5:10 p.m. in February. But being a recent Big Apple expatriate (and a homesick one, at that) I find his wit agrees with me.

Just digest his discussion of the upcoming Columbus anniversary, which he feels is a crock, believing C.C. actually invaded (as opposed to discovered) this great land of ours. This leads him to fellow explorer Marco Polo,

who's renowned for "stealing" spaghetti from the Chinese and bringing it back to Italy. Which in turn brings about a comparison of Chinese and Italian noodles, Chinese and Italian restaurants in NYC, a discourse on the abundance of Chinese take-out menus Manhattanites find slipped under their apartment doors, and finally a full-fledged formula for cold sesame noodles! Makes you work up an appetite, don't it?

A real treat for both the gray matter and the taste buds, this 'zine has all the right ingredients for success. One serving of FFT and you'll be askin' for seconds. (24 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, digest size) (VAL)

**FREAKBEAT #7** (\$3 pounds, Ivor Trueman, 23 Parkside Rd, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 2BD ENGLAND)

Reviews and interviews with English psychedelic bands, and an article by Terrence McKenna called "New Maps of Hyperspace." Each page is printed Oracle-style with different ink colors, making it hard to read, but the effect is interesting. (54 pages, color cover, typeset, offset printing, 8.5 X 11) (MLF)

**FULL DISCLOSURE #23** (\$24/12 issues or \$2 sample, 25819 W. Grass Lake Road, Antioch IL 60002) The FBI hates this newspaper, so you just know it's loaded with useful info. This issue discusses FAX signal interception, dumpster diving for evidence & how it applies to the 4th amendment, computer security and surveillance tips. (16 pages, tabloid, newsprint) (MLF)

**GNOSIS** (\$4.95 or \$20/4 issues, PO Box 14217, San Francisco, CA 94114) Let's get on thing straight -- there's nothing "fan" about this 'zine, it's "mag" through and through. A "Journal of the Western Inner Traditions," I have no doubt that *Gnosis*' genesis was outside standard publishing circles; but by the looks of it now, the boundaries of fanzinedom have been left far behind.

Where exactly is the fan/mag line drawn? Well, with the continuing advancements of the DTP world, that's getting harder and harder to pin down (and is certainly the topic for another article, another time). But despite its b&w interior, I'd have to say the full color (takes two hands to count 'em all) cover, board of directors, European distribution and professional journalist tone of *Gnosis* plant it firmly in magazine territory. Which, of course, means it shouldn't really be reviewed here, but that line is awful fuzzy....

This time around *Gnosis* explores the

reality of dreams, with a report on group dream experiments, an essay tackling the ethics of present day dream work, an explanation of how quantum physics alters our understanding of dreams and an excursion to the Celtic dreamland of Faerie. You'd be hard-pressed to come up with a more intellectually intriguing, topically diverse, yet simultaneously entertaining collection of pieces. Subjects are dealt with in totality, with every angle explored to minutiae. The editorial range is vast: psychology, religion, alchemy, philosophy, fantasy, history, magic, metaphysics and the occult. There truly is something for everyone. But be forewarned, this is not material for the lazy (free footnotes with every article!). Be prepared to perform some heavy-duty pondering and enjoy doing it! This is brain food that actually tastes good! (46 pages, off-set, color cover, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**GODSEND #17** (\$1, c/o Todd Fuquay, 1401 Fuquay Road, Evansville, IN 47715) "A periodical of progressive, electronic, experimental and industrial music." On the plate for issue number 17: Interviews with members of Skinny Puppy, Swans, Asmus Tietchens and PBK, plus reviews and an anti-drug war article. (MLF)

**HODAGS & HOODADDIES #3** (\$2, PO Box 901 Old Chelsea Station, NYC, NY 10113-0901) A black & white comic anthology with stuff by Danny Hellman, (bOING-bOING's superneat artist), Sean Taggart (another superneat bb artist) and other Noo Yohkas. The stories run from inscrutable & crudely scrawled to insightful & eyeball pleasin'. (MLF)

**HORN FARM #3** (\$1, 1463 E. Republican Suite 189, Seattle WA) More of them spooky detoured comics, mostly about necrophilia and drug abuse. (20 pp, xerox, digest) (MLF)

**A HOUSE UNITED AGAINST ITSELF** (Free, Box 02024, Columbus, OH 43202) An undirected and disjointed compilation of first-person narratives, fiction and excerpts that never inspires and rarely entertains. The exceptions being a surprisingly poetic, stream-of-consciousness recollection of childhood entitled "My First Hardon," a handful of post-modern haiku and a witty nine-liner that puts Clarence Thomas in his proper place -- the butt of a joke. (10 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, digest size) (VAL)

**INTERFERENCE ON THE BRAIN SCREEN #34** (\$2, Patrick Clark, PO Box 2761, St. Paul MN 55102) Patrick is an on-line information hunter and collector

for businesses. Producing *IOTBS* seems to be the way he blows off steam. This is a good issue - an interview with Paul di Filippc, some quotes on cyberhype and an essay about a couple of government office-workers who just don't give a good gosh darn. (28 pp, xerox, 8.5 x 7) (MLF)

**INTERTEK Volume 3.3** (\$4, 325 Ellwood Beach, #3, Goleta CA 93117 805/685-6557) This "Virtual Communities" issue explores what's going on in the developing BBS universe. Editor Steve Steinberg decided to ruffle some feathers by writing a nasty essay about USENET and then inviting hi-tech mavens and bigshots to comment. (37 pp, offset, standard) (MLF)

**LEGAL ACTION COMICS** (\$1.50, Danny Hellman, PO Box 901, Old Chelsea Stn, NYC NY 10113-0901) *Legal Action Comics* features two stories that appeared originally in *Screw*, Al Goldstein's NYC porn tabloid. The first story, "Wedding Bells for Superman" details the consummation of the wedding of Lois Lane and the Man of Steel. The second story, "The Cosby's VS the Simpsons" follows grumpman Cosby on his murderous rampage to get the person responsible for impregnating Lisa Bonet. The back cover of the comic has a portrait of G.H.W. Bush that succinctly captures the man and his policies. Every page is loaded with goodies - kitschy robots, goofy characters and funny signs. (24 pages, offset printing) (MLF)

**LOBSTER TELEPHONE #31** (10 pence, 148 Humber Road South, Beeston, Nottingham N69 2EX) It's always a pleasure to receive one of these one-week-wonders. Short essays, weird bits of news, collage art - your typical snide zine. Rubber cement, scissors and a key to the office copy machine. What more could you want from life? (MLF)

**MAC TIN TAC #2** (\$4.50 + \$1.00 postage, Gogo Guy Productions c/o Marc Tessier, PO Box 5212, Succ. C, Montreal, Quebec, CANADA H2X 3N2) A slick 48-page graphic novel about a strange cake factory and the banana-eating-ants, snobbish ruling class and horse-blinded people who live around it. Each chapter is scripted by Gogo Guy, but drawn by a different artist. A peculiar but consistent internal logic runs throughout the story. Mental peanut butter that sticks to the roof of your skull. (MLF)

**MADWORLD SURVIVAL GUIDE #3** (\$1.50 or \$7/6 issues, PO Box 791377, New Orleans, LA 70179-1377) Think MSG slows you down? Au contraire. At least not this kind, which is all about

action of the anarchist persuasion. How to rip-off AT&T, get back at large corporations through the use of business reply mail, and stage guerrilla warfare against suburban developers are just a few of the educational tidbits up for grabs here. Radical, but with a sense of humor, a local New Orleans feel and a surprisingly open editorial policy. Non-believers are dealt with intelligently and cordially. *MSG* manages to be sincere in its beliefs, without shoving 'em down your throat. (14 pages of 100% recycled, unbleached post-consumer paper, xeroxed, stapled, digest size) (VAL)

**MARK'S LITTLE BOOK ABOUT KINDER EGGS** (\$1, *Mark Pawson, PO Box 664, London, E5 OJW, UK*) Kinder Eggs are hollow egg-shaped chocolate shells which contain a toy surprise inside. They're sold all over Europe. Sorta the Old World version of Crackerjacks. Mark collects Kinder Eggs. Actually he collects the toys inside them. Mark put together this pamphlet to help him trade K.E. toys, but it's real neat even if you've never heard of the things before (like me). Each little book gives a brief history of K.E., a description of the toys Mark has acquired from recent K.E. purchases, a reprint of the toys' pictorial instructions, his updated want list, and K.E. related newspaper articles (like the one about a 4-year-old girl who opened her egg to find a toy TV showing naughty pictures of women). Kinda makes you wish Kinder Eggs were sold on these shores. (16 pages, xeroxed, stapled, 4 x 3) (VAL)

**MESHUGGAH #2** (\$5/5 issues, *Feh! Press, 2226 Hennepin Ave, Box 20, Minneapolis, MN 55405*) Absurdist stories about a man terrified by matches, a car-salesman who trades places for a day with the giant worm-king of the underworld, a junkie's lament, a time-hacking essay by Jacob Rabinowitz & Hakim Bey, the first chapter of a sickeningly violent story that takes place in the Australian outback, an advice column for cats, and a cartoon about a man named Floye who eats cornbread crumbled in buttermilk. (10 pages, typeset) (MLF)

**MONGO BOY #1** (\$3, checks payable to *Mark Brooks, Kaustik Culture, PO Box 4442, Boulder CO 80306*) Mark Brooks, the demented genius guitar player of the Warlock Pincers is also a demented genius cartoonist. *bOING-bOING* first became acquainted with MONGO BOY in the form of a micro-mini comic (praised highly in *bOING-bOING* #2). This *Mongo* is bigger, brassier, and full of

urine & acetic acid. Here, Mongo Boy's parents (never seen without paper bags over their heads <and the eyebrows on the bags change expression!>) take their wayward lad to a mental ward for some drug-sodden rehabilitation. The junior droog gets "fixed," but for how long? Highly recommended. (MLF)

**NOTHING BUT RECORD REVIEWS** (\$3, *Seidboard World Enterprises, PO Box 137, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012*) I applaud the premise here -- a 'zine catering to "independent music" -- but something went awry in putting it all down on paper.

My main gripe is the strict exclusion of major label material. Sure, I agree the majors do get exposure elsewhere, but the real reason behind the ban seems to have more to do with a militant anti-mainstream philosophy than anything else. (A primo example: *NBRR* accepts ads from majors, but only if they pay 10 times the normal rate and understand that their products will receive a lousy review in the same issue to "counteract any harmful effects from the ad.")

C'mon, trashing major music solely because it's on a major label is about as close-minded as shunning alternative offerings 'cause they're not listed in Billboard. As for those ad-generated "harmful effects": puhlease! Obviously editor Mykel Board isn't at all worried about the psychological havoc all those indie label ads his publication is packed with may wreak on subscribers.... *NBRR* needs to face facts: the use of double standards is no more justifiable for the "little guy" than for the president of Time-Warner.

The other aspect of *NBRR* that doesn't seem quite kosher is the somewhat contradictory editorial policy that ensures only good notices while promising to review all material received. Impossible. Not everyone making music these days should be. Realistically, either reviewers will have to pass on unworthy material or they're gonna have to lie like pigs and rave about every disc.

But, now that I've bitched and moaned for four paragraphs, let me just say that when it comes to the important stuff (the reviews themselves), all is forgiven. These are top-notch critiques. Informative and funny with a personal, original flair that's hard to find. No holier-than-thou rock snobs allowed, if you please. Buried beneath some of the more obscure material, new releases from Lisa Suckdog, Mudhoney and The Swans are evaluated in the latest edition.

(16 pages, xeroxed, stapled, standard size)(VAL)

**POPPIN' ZITS! LITE #9** (*Long SASE with 2 oz first-class postage, and "offering of like-scaled product"*) Jerod Pore's collage-bombs of Japanese bondage porn, laboratory animal articles, high-tech advertisements, and strange religions are disturbing and hilarious. Go ahead, get it and try to read it. You might throw it in the trash after glancing at the first page, but by then it will already be too late. The cleverly arranged images will have already burned themselves into your little noggin, and they will taunt you for the rest of your life. (12 pp, standard, recycled color paper)

**PSYCHOTRONIC VIDEO** (\$20/6 issues, *151 First Ave., New York, NY 10003*) Reviews of weird videos, zines and books, plus plenty of ads on how to get them for your very own. There are usually a few interviews with stars and directors of exploitation flicks in every issue. (MLF)

**THE REALIST #118** (\$2, or \$12/6 issues, *Box 1230, Venice CA 90294 310/392-5848*) More good stuff from satirist Paul Krassner. This issue features stupid things that Lowest Common Denominator Champion Harry Reasoner (or more likely his ghost writer) wrote about Krassner in his autobiography, notes about the gay outing phenomenon, a true story casting Pee-Wee Reubens in unfavorable light, and my fave regular section, *Media Freak*: weirdness culled from the corporate media engines.

Issue #119 - As usual, Paul Krassner's subversive newsletter keeps me entertained and paranoid at the same time. Lots of sex fun in this issue, thanks to the recent Clarence Thomas Disinfotainment Special. Interesting factoid culled from their pages: "The Partnership [for a Drug-Free America] spends \$360 million a year in advertising, second only to McDonald's. (Standard, 8 pages, Typeset) (MLF)

**SECT 7 #2** (\$2, *640 Polk St. #302, San Francisco, CA 94102*) Borrowing their name from a radical '60s Japanese student group, a bunch of English-speaking natives and Japan-residing Yanks have joined forces to document the happenings of today's Tokyo underground. A lot of area is covered here: interactive media, present day Vietnam and its changing relationship with the West, positive anarchism, the recent transformation of Japan's socio-cultural system and flying saucers. Well written and layed-out. A good, solid

'zine. (14 pages, off-set, color cover, stapled, 7 x 10) (VAL)

**THE SILICON WOMB** #1-3 (\$1.50 or trade for "curios, demented doctrines, polymorphously perverse polemic, pornographic xerography and other items of psychic prestidigitation" *Ida Libido*, 2310 48th Ave, San Francisco CA 94116) The Silicon Womb turns up the knobs on Silicon Valley's throbbing psyche by mining its rich vein of computer sexuality. Like Jerod Pore of *Poppin' Zits!*, Ida makes collages from images clipped out of trade journals and Japanese bondage porn magazines, then adds her strange and wonderful poems and stories. (recycled colored paper, xeroxed) (MLF)

**SMART DRUG NEWS** #1 (\$40/12 issues *CERI* PO Box 4029, Menlo Park CA 94026) An 8-page newsletter that discusses chemicals the editors claim will increase your intelligence. The major article is about L-Deprenyl, a drug related to amphetamine that is supposed to keep you young and horny. There's also a Q&A section where folks can fax in their questions (415/323-3684) about smart drugs. Interesting, well researched stuff. (Standard, 8 pages, Typeset) (MLF)

**STATE(S) OF THE ART** (\$2.50, *Marshall Communications*, 100 Manhattan Ave., Suite 1210, Union City, NJ 07087) A critical catalogue of American new fiction, giving greatest attention to newer publications by younger and unestablished authors. Editor Phil Leggiere's reviews are engaging and insightful without being overly-intellectual. Broken down into sections ("Multiculturalism/New Polyglot," "Cyber and Post-Cyberpunk," "Raw Picto-Fictions"), Phil lists enough new novels to last eager readers well into summer. He also refers to recent works by *Village Voice* writers C. Carr and Donna Gaines -- a sure sign of intelligence and good taste any day. Among the up-and- comings of tomorrow, you can check out the latest from today here-and-nows Karen Finley and Brett Easton Ellis. (11 pages, xeroxed, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**STRANGE DAYS** (\$4.95 or \$15/4 issues, PO Box 564, Worcester, MA 01613) First-rate, light horror fiction here -- with a dash of comics and a helping of "Stranger Than Fiction" real-life news tidbits spicing things up along the way. A smattering of provocative pen & inks add just the right truly disturbing touch. Another "must see" for disciples of the bizarre and unusual. (28 pages, off-set, color cover, stapled, standard size)(VAL)

**STRANGE MAGAZINE** (\$4.95 or \$17.95/4 issues, PO Box 2246, Rockville, MD 20847) A slick quarterly exploring the realm of Forteana. Cryptozoology, UFOs, paranormal behavior and the Loch Ness monster all garner substantial coverage. These folks take a lengthy look at events that most of us dismiss without ever fully understanding. An in-depth investigation into the world and workings of British shamanic surrealist (and master hoaxter) Tony "Doc" Shiels serves as the latest edition's high point. This is serious stuff for those who find the world of weird and bizarre phenomena no laughing matter. (34 pages, off-set, color cover, stapled, standard size) (VAL)

**THE STRANGER** #2 (\$1, PO Box 31848, Seattle WA 98103-1848) The identity of the anonymous editor of *The Stranger* is one of the worst-kept secrets of zinedom, but so what? It's a thought-provoking newsletter with lively debate and button-pushing topics. The editor is prodding for a debate on abortion rights and the disappearance of Yankee ingenuity. (4 pp, standard, typeset) (MLF)

**STY ZINE** #3 (*Free, but a coupla stamps probably wouldn't hurt none*, 5021 Central Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46205) A handful of bored, alienated, Indpls high schoolers take a stab at assimilating this nutty thing we call life -- and succeed irreverently! Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bob Fuelmeup and a Crispix eating skatelpunk named Blake are all featured, along with a god-like exhortation on the virtues of Waffle Houses. With the kind of raw look and feel that always seems to endear itself to my heart, I'm gonna subscribe to this one myself. Best of all, it's dishwasher safe! (20 pages, xeroxed, unbound, digest size) (VAL)

**SUBCONSCIOUS SOUP** (*Free*, 103 Nicholas St, Kissimmee FL 34758) Ho hum. Between PC plugs to save the rainforests, stop animal testing, support the pro-choice movement, boycott Exxon and recycle, nothing but repetitive pleas to legalize pot (supported only by personal deductions, which the editor tries to pass off as fact -- a tactic he'd probably accuse Pat Buchanan of), some Dead 'zine reviews and an overabundance of truly atrocious verse. (Tho' I gleefully admit to enjoying all the fundamentalist Christian- bashing found therein!) For stuff like this I'll stick with *High Times* and *Relix*. The '60s are over. (8 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, digest size) (VAL)

**TALKING RAVEN** #3 (\$2, *Paratheatrical Research*, PO Box 45758, Seattle WA

98145 (206)781-5691) Antero Alli's "Journal of Imaginative Trouble" is an archetypal assault on the dogma that's ossified in your brain. Each issue explores a different theme; this time it's "sanctuary." There's an excerpt from Hakim Bey's instant classic *TAZ* and an interesting piece about Dreamtime Village - "a permaculture hypermedia village" in Southwest Wisconsin, and a review of a recent SRL show in Seattle. If you enjoy Alli's work in *bOING-bOING*, you'd better grab this. (MLF)

**THINGS & STUFF** #1 (\$2.50 or \$9/6 issues, *Mat Marketplace*, PO Box 2371, Jamaica Plain MA 02130) Sort of a miniature version of *Factsheet Five*, *Things & Stuff* reviews items that editor Sheldon Goldberg finds interesting, including zines, catalogs, pro wrestling and porn viddies. There's an article called "Media Musings," about local TV and infomercials. (10 pp, xeroxed, standard) (MLF)

**TORN SCROTUM** #6 (\$3, *PO Box 1523, Place Bonaventure, Montreal, Quebec H5A 1HE, CANADA*) Contains an argument against meat-eatin' and a blast at the children's game *Hungry Hungry Hippo*, the playing of which, according to Mr or Ms Torn Scrotum, makes tots greedy. (MLF)

**TRIBAL DONUT** (\$2, 41 Sutter St., Box 1348, San Francisco, CA 94104) "Tribal Donut is, after all, just a phrase, a name pulled out of someone's babbling sleep in the grand tradition of anti-traditions. Like every name, it concocts an illusory something out of nothing; and like every name it reveals a pattern that was present but hidden, waiting to be unfolded. (Actually, it's more like a way of making what we'd be doing anyway seem somehow more significant.)"

Gee, it's nice to see these folks making light of what they do, 'cause the rest of the material here is heavy stuff, indeed. Excerpts from Donald Tyson's *The New Magus*, describing a consciousness expanding, nervous system-centered, post- Hiroshima philosophy, amused me. Outtakes from a published interview with G.I. Gurdjieff on his ingestion of "assisting substances" in the search for the underlying factor connecting all religions, transfixed me. And a lengthy Timothy Leary reprint just exhausted me.

Personally, my brain hurt after a cover to cover perusal, but if you used to be a libertarian, self-defining, revelation-seeking, intellectual English major in college, you'll probably fit right in here. (12 pages, xeroxed, color cover, stapled, 8.5 x 7) (VAL)

**URINE NATION NEWS #7** (*Subscription \$1 per issue, Digit Press, P.O. Box 920066, Norcross GA 30092*) Editor

David Ross continues to turn out the best source of information I've seen about the War On Drugs. This issue has loads of news about urine testing and how to fight back. Ross has also started selling two new products - freeze-dried urine, and vials of THC detection-negator. George Bush would be proud of the way this enterprising young man is taking positive steps to counter the nation's recession by selling these fine Made-In-America products. (MLF)

**WORLD DOMINATION REVIEW #0 (\$2, Larry Taylor, PO Box 762, Madison WI 53701-0762, do not put WDR or World Domination Review on the envelope)** Outstanding conspiracy satire mixed with "wild paranoid speculation." This issue has an exclusive interview with William Casey (residing in Hell), explaining why Bush doesn't want to kill Saddam Hussein. (8 pages, 8.5 X 11, unstapled) (MLF)

**WORM #27 (\$10/12 issues 115 Grand St, Brooklyn, NY 11211-4123)** Worm wriggles itself through the strange mud we call work. Here we have an erotic dancer describing her decision to work in raunchy establishments instead of plying her trade in yuppie watering holes, a short survival guide for newcomers to corporations, and a look at a spooky employee handbook. Worm also lists events, and features poetry and comics. (8 pages, 8.5 X 11, typeset) (MLF)

**XEROMORPHIC #4 (\$4, Terrance Jennings Wharton, PO Box 4, Lancaster, OH 43130)** From a "severely paneled house trailer in rural south-central Ohio" comes a 'zine dedicated to the reproduction of rare, oldie movie ads. No Golden Globe winners here, nosirree Bob. In fact we're not even talking about B or C films. The LMNOP range is more like it.

With each issue embracing a different cinematic genre, #4 is filled with plugs for "roughie-weirdie" flicks from '65-'67. The ads are preceded by a short intro and a list of the producers/directors featured and their respective works. Listed in chronological order, the only omission in the ads is their place of origin (like, what paper were they found in?). Coming attractions for *Olga's Massage Parlor*, *Rope of Flesh*, *Massacre of Pleasure* and *Run, Swinger, Run* will have you rummaging through the Blockbuster cult section pronto. (29 pages, xeroxed, color cover, spiral bound, standard size) (VAL).



"The Baton Death March"

Marc Laidlaw

## Harmful Insects

Insects are everywhere. They fly through the air, crawl on the ground, and live inside the food that you eat.

All insects are bad. They carry diseases, destroy the environment, and adversely affect all mankind.

**100? 1000?**

Think of how many different kinds of insects there are. How many could there be? A hundred? A thousand? In actuality, there are only six types of insects. Let's look at each one.

This is a common house fly. The fly is a very dangerous insect. If a fly should land on you, you wouldn't live more than an hour. Isn't he cute though?

This is how a spider looks. The webs that spiders spin destroy the ozone layer and make landfills grow rapidly. Have you seen a spider lately? Did you think to kill it?

This is a roach. You can find roaches inside your very own home. Most people think roaches are harmless, but they aren't. They are responsible for 95% of America's drug trafficking. They are also Baptists.

This final insect type is the ant. Everyone knows what hard workers ants are. What everyone doesn't know is that ants break down family values and cause babies to be aborted by the thousands. Ants do work hard, all right. They work hard to screw you over!

You probably think that bees are good because they make honey. This is a lie. In actuality, honey causes birth defects and kills little lambs. Bees are also atheists. Above all, though, they are very, very bad.

Few would argue that the butterfly is a beautiful creature, but did you know that this beautiful creature spreads AIDS and cancer all over the world? How do you like butterflies now, knowing that they are killing all of your friends?

So now you know the six types of insects and the harmful effects of each. Insects carry out Satan's will. Each and every little bug contains little parts of the devil. Insects are your friends! They want to enter your soul!

# not funny haha

# FUNNYBOOK REVIEW

## Barry Barrows

The following reviews are all positive. There are many different kinds of comic books and they all have different sorts of appeal to different sorts of people, but some are simply done better than others. The comics reviewed in this column are determined by the reviewer (that's me) to be of superior quality. You may not like every title reviewed because a certain subject matter may just bore you to tears, but if a title looks at all appealing, chances are you'll like it. These titles should be available at most comic shops. - Barry Barrows

### Real Stuff

Fantagraphics Books

Published every few months or so  
Black & White

*Real Stuff* tells the stories of stuff that has happened to writer Dennis P. Eichhorn. Each story is illustrated by a different artist like Peter Bagge, Roberta Gregory, Holly Tuttle, J.R. Williams, Michael Dougan, Mark Zingarelli, Mary Fleener, Carol Moiseiwitsch and others of post-underground ilk. It may seem obnoxious to devote a series to telling stories about yourself, but in Eichhorn's case, he's doing the public a favor; remember, truth is stranger than fiction.

What makes Eichhorn's stories work is that he is one of those people who seems to have done *everything* and he isn't afraid to show that *everything* includes some mistakes and foolish moves. Examples of story material are as follows: Eichhorn was in jail and watched a guy standing next to him in the lunch line get stabbed to death, later he watched *In Cold Blood* with a room full of murderers; he gave 400 boxes of candy to a woman who later turned out to have several dead men buried underneath her trailer home (he could conceivably have become one of them); he's always getting



Real Stuff © 1991 Dennis P. Eichhorn  
Art © 1991 Mary Fleener

into fights - once he kicked a bully's eye out and the police almost thanked him for it; as a forest firefighter, he learned how to piss on his hands to toughen his skin and reduce blistering and how not to spray mosquito killer up your butt; in San Francisco, he was once paid \$20 to walk up and down a man's back wearing flippers; and many other stories which tend to involve affairs or one-night stands or drug trips or bar fights or any combination of these.

Eichhorn has spent most of his life in Idaho, Washington, and the Northwest in general, and this is where the stories tend to be set. He used to run a small-press newspaper called the *Northwest Extra* where he

started to correspond with people like Charles Bukowski, Hunter S. Thompson and Harvey Pekar; consequently, these folks have all appeared in *Real Stuff* as genuine funnybook characters (which is nothing new for Pekar, whose *American Splendor* mag is another autobiographical comic jewel).

Eichhorn has plenty of back issues and he wants to sell them (*see ad this issue*); they feature work by all of the people listed above as well as Robert Crumb, S. Clay Wilson, Drew Friedman, Ivan Stang, Lynda Barry and plenty of others.

As eyebrow-raising as many of *Real Stuff*'s stories are, Eichhorn has said that the only inventions are some speeding up of events for the sake of a more cohesive story and some name changes. No matter what he's done, Eichhorn is a great storyteller and his comic is an excellent example of how the medium can be used to easily relate quick, personal anecdotes. His use of different artists is a treat for at least two reasons: 1) All of the artists are good and they provide variety. 2) The inconsistency of art-styles emphasizes the consistency of the writing style; it is a writer's comic; the art is a tool for portraying the tone of a particular story; it helps Eichhorn seem that much more "real" to see him drawn in so many different ways.

If everyone wrote biographies, then reading even a few could quickly get boring, not necessarily because of content so much as storytelling ability. As far as I know, though, everyone is not busy at their typewriters, nor will they be soon. So, in the meantime, be assured that at least *Real Stuff* is real stuff.

### YUMMY FUR

Drawn And Quarterly Publications  
Published every two or three months or so  
Black & White

There are a number of autobiographical comics showing up on the

market. Literature has typically dealt with autobiography disguised as fiction; what is remarkable about the surge of this sort of material in the comic market is that it is so undisguised. There is no effort to hide or distract the reader from the fact that these stories are about a writer whose name can actually be looked up in the phone book. Dennis P. Eichhorn's *Real Stuff* is one example of such pimples-and-all self-disclosure; Chester Brown's *Yummy Fur* is another.

*Yummy Fur* started as a mini-comic in the mid-80s and then grew to a standard black-and-white put out by Vortex Publications shortly thereafter. For the first twenty issues or so, *Yummy Fur* brought attention to itself as a surreal, SF spoof populated by a penis from another dimension, a ghost, aliens, and bleakly ordinary people (who were by far the most creepy characters). Most of these early stories are collected in a highly recommended volume called *Ed the happy Clown*, named for the perpetually dismayed protagonist who never smiles nor has reason to. Brown took a chance on losing his audience when he completed this storyline and suddenly switched his emphasis to more "normal" autobiographical stories. Not long after this, he also switched to new publisher Drawn and Quarterly. Consequently, other than the comic having the same title as before, there are only two things about it today that bear any resemblance to it when it first began.

The first thing is the surreal tone. As normal as Brown's life is as he relates his first sexual experiences (hiding *Playboys* and masturbating) and his day-to-day life in Canada, the pacing of the stories and the mysterious motivations of their stone-faced characters nonetheless add up to create a sombre world not wholly unlike the superficially more absurd one featured in *Yummy Fur's* earlier issues. It is a more quiet world, one in which Brown is

AS WE LAY ON THE GROUND WAITING TO BE FOUND ( THOUGH WE NEVER WERE ) WE TALKED: I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT EXCEPT THAT IT SEEMED WE TALKED ABOUT EVERYTHING.



Yummy Fur © 1992 Chester Brown

unquestionably at the center, but it is one in which a person's motivations are just as frequently indecipherable and apparently absurd.

The other carry-over from the comic's original format is Brown's short adaptations from the Bible of the life of Jesus that have appeared at the end of nearly every issue. Brown's version is not strongly reverent or irreverent; he portrays biblical events so that when you actually see Jesus say many of the things he said, his hard, disciplinarian side becomes more evident. Jesus' brows are always knit and he never smiles, although for different reasons than Ed the Happy Clown, one would suppose. When Jesus speaks in his now-famous parables and metaphors, he strikes such a contrast to the simple language of the poor people around him that he appears confusing and alienating. Visually speaking, the harshness of the living conditions in biblical times is conveyed exceptionally well; nobody looks pretty like they do in Sunday School books. Ultimately, this portrayal is not reverent, but the editorializing

manifests itself through the visualization of Jesus and his surroundings, not anything that is said about him.

Brown is an excellent storyteller. He knows how to use words sparingly and when to let silence speak for itself. This strength is common to his early absurd work, his autobiographical material, and his biblical adaptations. Whether he continues with any of these genres in particular or not does not matter nearly so much as that he just continues.

## METROPOL

*Epic Comics*  
*Monthly*  
*Color*

This series by Ted McKeever is consistently unpredictable; you can be securely assured that you do not have any idea what will happen from one issue to another.

McKeever used his same style of haunting, scratchy artwork, and tight, existentialist prose in his previous titles *Eddy Current*, *Transit*, and *Plastic Forks*, and practice has made perfect, because in *Metropol* his work is more engaging, resonant and frightening than ever. The fluid use of bright colors against dark, black backgrounds evokes a sense of unknowable forces in motion; it is light dancing in the void. The unsettling balance of color and darkness, the familiar and the unknown, the sense of paradox, is furthered by the very appearance of people, who are both pillow-y and bony at once.

Each issue of this series has developed the plot, but it has always taken turns that were never expected. In the beginning, a somewhat typical existentialist tale of angst seemed to be the primary theme as a common man in the big city became a target of the authorities much as Herr K did in Kafka's *The Trial*. Then, incident by incident, issue by issue, the scenario

begins to unfold: a plague is raging through the city causing an unprecedented number of deaths; a large yellow woman with a cross etched on her forehead brutally kills a would-be attacker; a coffee shop waitress commits suicide, apparently to avoid the plague; Jasper (the Herr K common man) dies of the plague in jail; the dead waitress comes back to life as a demon, (she would have been an angel but she committed suicide); a psychopath murders two prostitutes and is killed in turn by a lonely man who was in love with one of the dead women, and then he too is shot dead by a policeman -- they all wake up in the morgue with yellow skin and various

life-symbols on their foreheads; Jasper also wakes up in the same fashion; monstrous demons who were all once people begin terrorizing the city; the yellow skinned people all team up, they seem to be angles and they have names like Sarakiel and Uriel; the

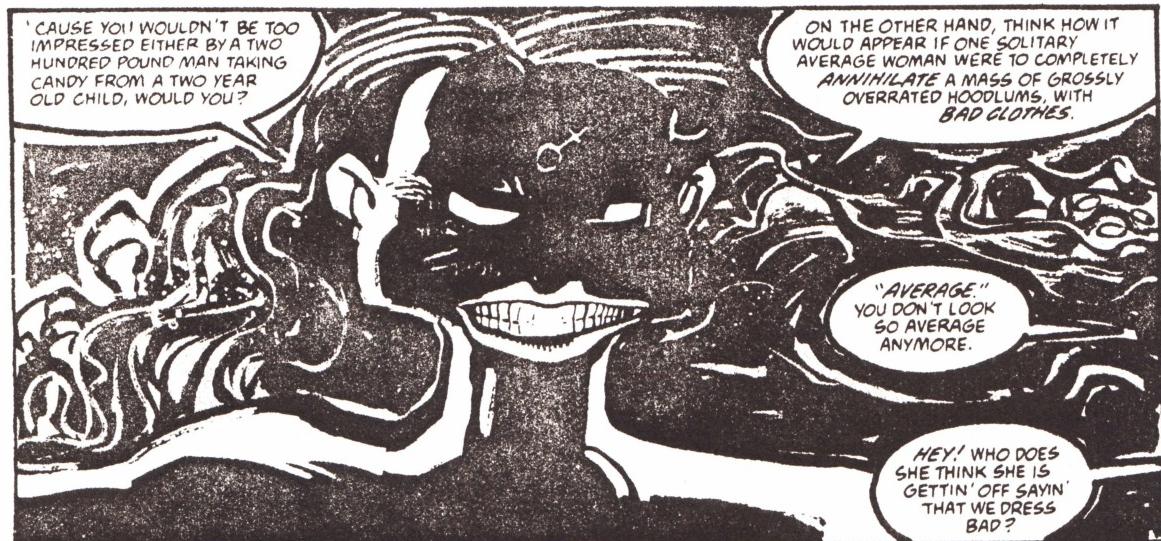
psychopath, who had appeared to be one of them, turns out to be a demon named Jack Wack; the angels begin to lose their rotting skin as it becomes replaced by metal; McKeever's old character Eddy Current rises from the grave, although he doesn't much look like the angels or demons; all this and a number of other events slowly lead up to the realization that we are witnessing the genesis of the Biblical War chronicled in *Revelations*.

McKeever reveals the meaning of each event in the story only as the characters come to understand these events themselves. In other words, something happens and nobody

knows why and it seems to make no sense, but once the situation is put into context, all falls into place; the story pays off. This is much appreciated given that many stream-of-consciousness stories never do "pay-off." What McKeever has ingeniously constructed is a story that at first appears to be a haphazard stream of horrific imagery with possibly little purpose other than to barrage and overwhelm the readers' senses with sheer stylish angst, but actually turns out to be a carefully crafted and finely characterized vision of the events leading up to *Revelations*. The problem is that McKeever surprises

sensitive, kind and thoughtful; he is also environmentally aware and politically correct. How mild-mannered senatorial speechwriter Ronald Lithgow became forever trapped in the large stone-like, yet organic body of Concrete is a story that Chadwick wrote only to create a viable background for the character. Chadwick could have been content enough simply to write what it would be like for a normal man to be put into a powerful body. So the stories tend to deal with just that, the daily struggles and aspirations of a unique misfit whose body proves both advantageous and cumbersome.

The most immediate problem in a



Metropol © 1991 Ted McKeever

the reader enough that this may not be what he's leading up to at all.

## CONCRETE

*Dark Horse Comics  
Various Mini-Series  
Color*

In the tradition of standard super-monster-heroes like the Thing, the Hulk, Frankenstein and Tor Johnson, comes Concrete, created, written and drawn by Paul Chadwick. This comparison is superficial, though, because Concrete shares only physical characteristics with these monster-heroes; his personality is purposely cast against type to the extreme, he is therefore

situation like this is the inability to consummate a sexual relationship. Concrete is having difficulty with this because the scientist that the government has assigned to study him is a woman whom he finds distractingly attractive. She too is obsessed with him, but only on the level of scientific inquiry. The situation is getting stickier and is being developed at a strong, dramatic pace. Also building in the background is the relationship Concrete has with the government, which allows him to live in peace at its discretion. With problems like these, he just tries to avoid the



Concrete © 1992 Paul Chadwick

media and be a nice guy.

Concrete has appeared in numerous short stories in the *Dark Horse Presents* anthology comic and he has had his own series for about 10 issues (all of these were black and white). Chadwick's current plans for the character are to feature him in various mini-series for each story idea. The first of these, currently in publication, is *Concrete: Fragile Earth* (this one's in color). Also, the *Dark Horse Presents* appearances have been collected in a book entitled *Concrete: The Complete Short Stories*. All of these are highly recommended.

Thankfully, the fantastic elements in this series are used sparingly and they relate only to Concrete himself in order to make him more credible given his circumstances. His personality is believable as it is. He is soft-spoken and sensitive, the model of a likeable guy, and his noble ambition for his prowess and stamina is merely to test his abilities. As a writer, Concrete dreams of doing what no one has done before, so he attempts to climb Mt. Everest and to swim the Pacific Ocean; he fails in these and other such endeavors. Using his abilities to be a crime-fighter is never even discussed.

In a story that appeared in a benefit comic called *Within Our Reach*, published by Star Reach Productions, Concrete's realistic outlook was portrayed in tight summary fashion. He nearly resorted to violence and destroyed an all-terrain vehicle with superhero-like

righteous indignation, but once he pictured himself doing it, he also pictured the lawsuit that would surely follow and resigned himself to a peaceful and ultimately more positive solution to the conflict. In the end, this quiet story had no "action" in it other than what Concrete briefly imagined, this being more common to what the average person experiences in a day.

Concrete's large and unwieldy body causes plenty of physical problems as well as philosophical. He's always breaking things and he has to use a stack of cinderblocks as a chair. He gets around by sitting in the bed of a pickup truck, frequently missing the conversation of his friends in the truck's cab. His solitary posture, sitting in the back of the truck, not unlike an innocent dog, is representative of his place in life -- not in the driver's seat, but crucially weighing down the vehicle. •

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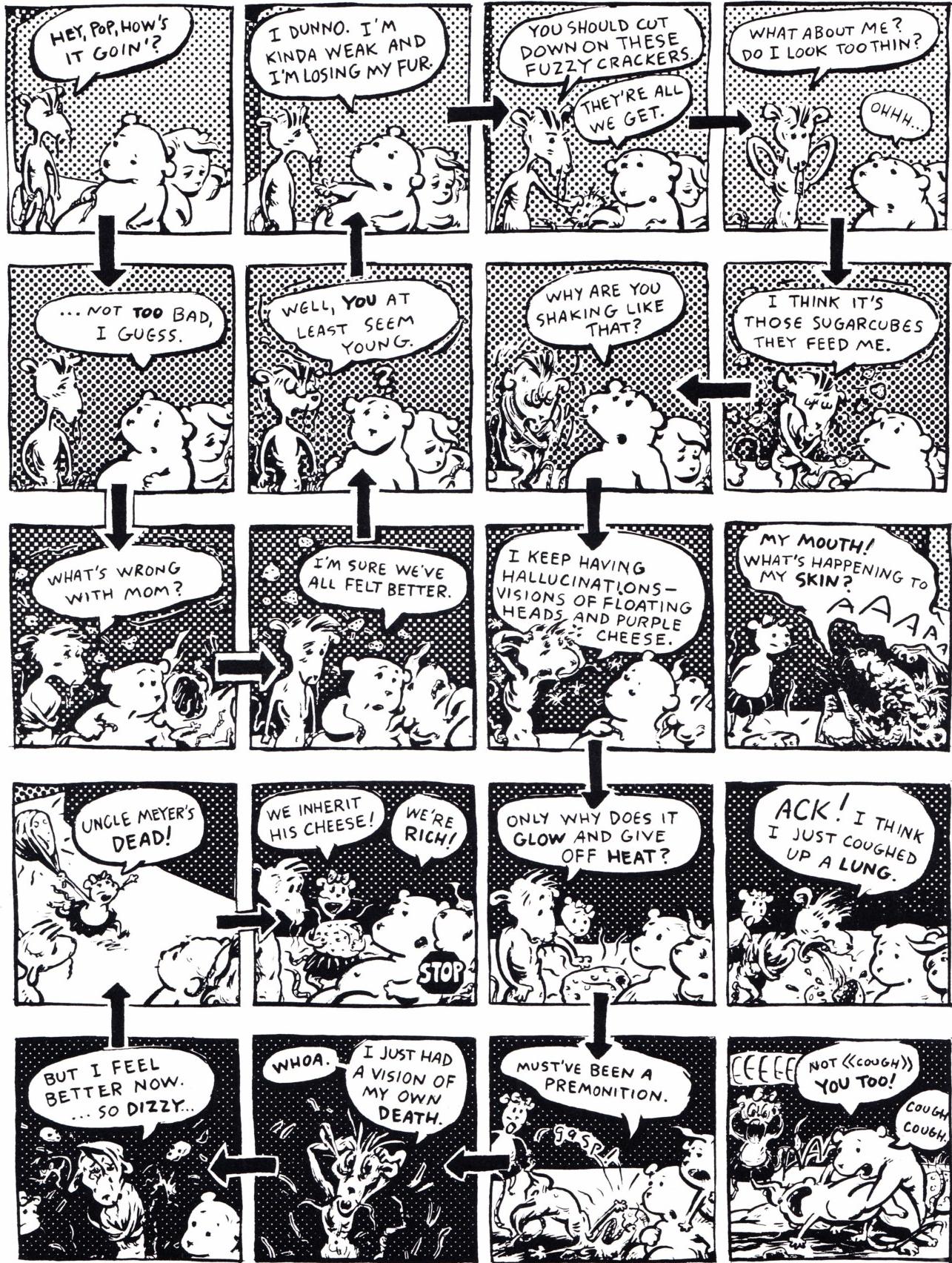
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# A HAPPY END

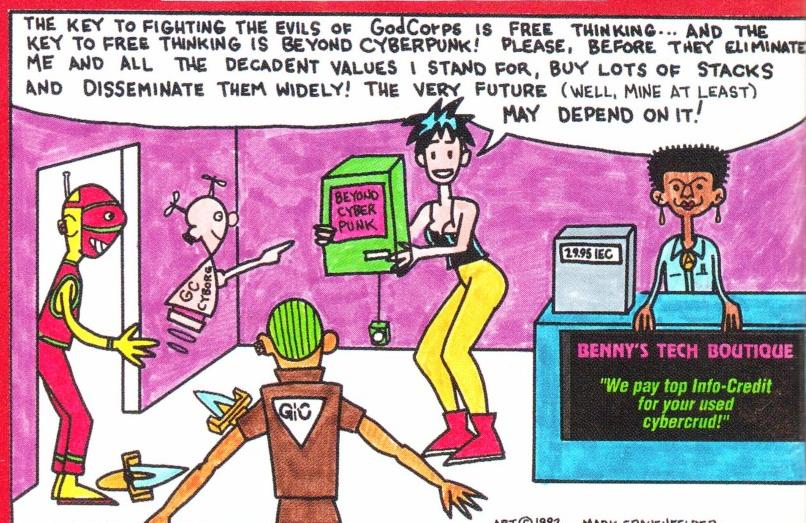
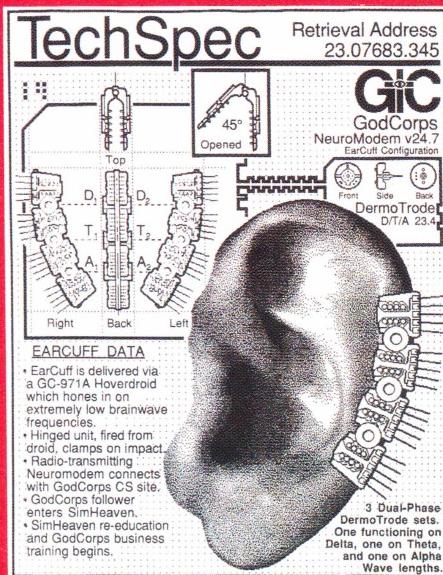
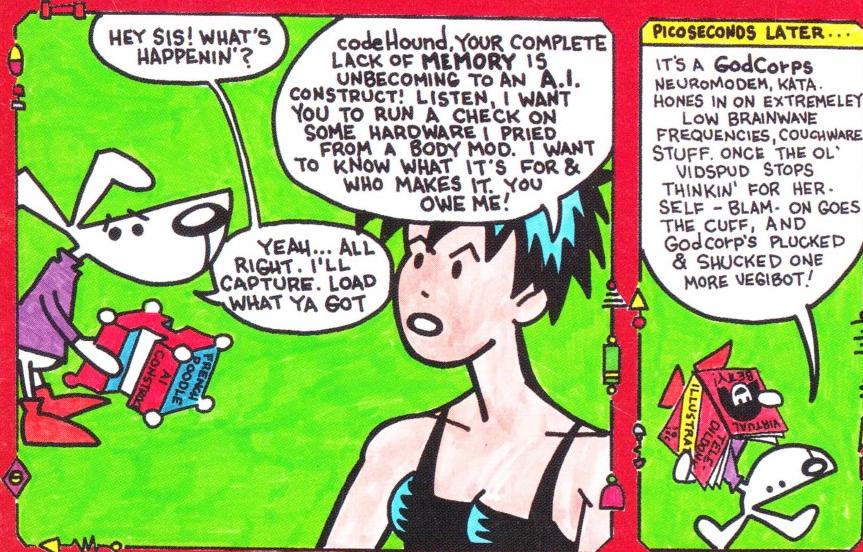
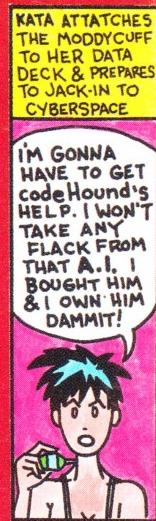
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